The Proceedings
of
THE SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
1978

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The South Carolina Historical Association supplies the PROCEEDINGS to all its members. The Executive Committee elects the Editor. Beginning in 1935, every fifth number contains an index for the preceding five years.

THE PROCEEDINGS
of
The South Carolina
Historical Association
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JAMES O. FARMER, JR.
Editor

LANCASTER
THE SOUTH CAROLINA
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MINUTES

South Carolina Historical Association

Annual Meeting - 1978

The Forty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Association convened at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, April 1, 1978, in Shipp Hall Lounge at Wofford College in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Over 100 members and guests were present. President Richard Gannaway presided, and Joab M. Lesesne, Jr., president of the college, and Lewis P. Jones, chairman of the department of history, welcomed the Association.

There were two morning sessions. A United States session in Shipp Hall Lounge was convened by Hewitt Adams, Clemson, and featured papers on "South Carolina Leadership in the Southern Unification Movement, 1848-49" by Thelma Jennings of Middle Tennessee State University, and "W. W. Boyce, A Leader of the Southern Peace Movement" by Roger Leemhuis of Clemson. This discussants were James Gettys, Erskine, and Larry Nelson, Francis Marion. A European session met in Burwell Campus Center, with Jamie W. Moore, The Citadel, presiding. William J. Brockington, USC-Aiken, read a paper on "The Unionist Party and Irish Home Rule," and William J. Lavery, Furman, read a paper entitled "The Chicherin and Litvinov Missions to Great Britain, 1917-18." William R. Ferrell, USC-Sumter, and Birdsall S. Viault, Winthrop, commented.

The Luncheon meeting in Burwell Campus featured a slide report by Marvin and Mary Kathryn Cann, Lander, on "The Ninety Six Excavations." The Business Meeting followed. The minutes were approved, and the Secretary-Treasurer made the Financial Report. The following changes in dues were approved:

Individual Memberships	$7.50
Student Memberships	$5.00
Institutional Memberships	$6.50

The officers for 1978-79 were elected by acclamation:

President: Joseph Wightman (USC-Conway)

Vice President: Hewitt Adams (Clemson)

Secretary-Treasurer: A. V. Huff, Jr. (Furman)

Executive Committee: John Edmunds (USC-Spartanburg)

Editor, *Proceedings*: James O. Farmer (USC-Lancaster)

The president announced the following meeting places of the Association: Clemson (1979), The Citadel (1980), University of South Carolina, Columbia (1981).

John Edmunds presided over the afternoon session. Daniel W. Hollis, USC, read a paper on "Cole L. Blease, 1919-24," and Winfrid B. Moore, Jr., spoke on "Soul of the South: James F. Byrnes and the Racial Issue in American Politics, 1914-41." The discussants were Ernest M. Lander, Clemson, and Edmund Drago, College of Charleston.

At 4 P.M. James Farmer introduced a film, "A Place in Time." And at 5 P.M. Professor and Mrs. L. P. Jones entertained the Association at their home. The Dinner meeting convened at 6:15 P.M. and Neill Macaulay, University of Florida, presented an address, "Cuban Revolution in Historical Perspective."

A. V. Huff, Jr.
Secretary-Treasurer

"The Unionist Party and the Third Home Rule Crisis, 1912-1914."[1]

by

W. S. Brockington, Jr.

In July 1914, leading British politicians made a major attempt by formal meeting to settle the long standing and by then explosive question of Irish Home Rule. The famous Buckingham Conference ended in complete failure, however, for as the Prime Minister said, "The Conference being unable to agree, either in principle or in detail, ...brought its meetings to a conclusion."[2] With these words to the House of Commons, Herbert Henry Asquith announced the failure of parliamentary democracy in Great Britain. Home Rule for Ireland was not to be settled by bargaining and compromise, the two great touchstones of a plural democracy. Negotiation, both secret and public, had failed. To many, the result of this final failure would be civil war in Great Britain before the end of the year. The situation could hardly have been interpreted otherwise as armed defiance to the will of Parliament had been guaranteed if Home Rule became law. And Home Rule would become law before the 1914 Session of Parliament came to an end.

The third Government of Ireland Bill--introduced in the House of Commons on 11 April 1912, and twice rejected by the House of Lords--was to become law under the provisions of the Parliament Act of 1911.[3] In Ulster the slogan "We won't have it" was supported by a grim Protestant majority that was determined to resist the implementation of Home Rule in Ulster--by force if necessary. Supporting the claims and demands of the Protestant Ulstermen was the Unionist Party, which, under the direction of Andrew Bonar Law, had bound itself to a declared policy of total and unqualified support for Ulster. In the three other traditional provinces of Ireland support for Home Rule by the overwhelming Roman Catholic majority was just as vociferous as was Ulster's opposition. With such support the Irish Nationalist Party, or Nationalists, was determined to have Home Rule for Ireland--all of Ireland. The Liberal Party, committed to Home Rule for a single Ireland both by ideology and by political necessity, was as bound to its ally, the Nationalists, as was the Unionist Party to its Ulster partner. Both major parties had strived for compromise but had been unable to effect a settlement of any kind. This impasse had arisen not only because of the limitations on concessions that the Irish ally of each was willing to accept but also because of a basic mistrust which had undermined the regard that each party held for the other. Under such circumstances bargaining and compromise could hardly take place.

If Home Rule for Ireland had been the single issue at stake, the British political system probably could have withstood the challenge. But the Home

Rule controversy brought to the fore the vast differences between the Liberal Party and the Unionist Party. Particularly after the first Home Rule Crisis of 1886, issues that either party considered fundamental had often led to struggles that left both parties embittered and distrustful. As each parliamentary party attempted to convey the importance of these issues to an ever expanding electorate, fiery political rhetoric had further broadened the chasm between the two. Compounding this long-simmering antipathy was the plight of the Unionist Party in 1911. It had been six years in the political wilderness; it had lost three consecutive elections and held only two-fifths of the seats in the House of Commons; it had been humiliated by the disastrous struggle over the Parliament Bill. Tariff Reform had split the Party; the "Ditch-Hedger" controversy had factionalized it further. The Liberals had been successful in countering virtually every move made by the Unionist Party and seemed invincible. They could stay in office until 1915, given Irish support, and there appeared to be little the Unionists could do to topple them. Finally, following A. J. Balfour's resignation of the party leadership in November 1911, the Unionists were without an experienced party leader. Bonar Law, a former Glaswegian iron-monger who was, outside Parliament, relatively unknown, had been a compromise choice as Balfour's replacement.

The election of Bonar Law to the position of Leader of the Unionist Party in the House of Commons was quite significant. Balfour, the cool aristocrat, had run the Party on Nineteenth Century lines; Bonar Law, the ironmaster, was to run it on Twentieth Century lines. He was typical of many of the younger Tory politicians--tough, middle-class men who disdained the club image of former eras. These new men with new ideas had come to power because the needs of the Party demanded their specialties. The party organization was, in 1911, chaotic at best and was in dire need of good management. These new men were business managers who wanted to run the political machine as a business and not as a witty, urbane, exclusive men's club. Moreover, to these men, the Balfourian style of politics had been found wanting; new methods of attacking the opponents would have to be tried. Balfour's style had been that of dialectician and debater, a style which impressed parliamentarians but left most voters cold; Bonar Law's style was quite the opposite--tough, terse and fighting. The rhetoric of politics soon reflected this "new style"[4] of politician as politics quickly became increasingly partisan and vituperative. Party rank and file, disunited and in disarray, was willing to turn to these new faces and personalities in order to return to power. Thus, even though Bonar Law technically had to share leadership with the Marquess of Lansdowne, who led the Unionists in the House of Lords, it soon became evident that the new men and not aging aristocrats were going to dominate the Unionist Party and its actions. To these new men the unification of the Party was a matter of primary importance. Once this had been accomplished, the Party would stand an excellent chance of driving the Liberals from office.

It had long been recognized in Great Britain that when the Parliament Bill of 1910 was passed, Home Rule would not be long in following. With its passage in 1911, the time had finally come when the Liberal Party would have to redeem its pledge of Home Rule for Ireland. As, for a variety of reasons, Home Rule was anathema to the many branches of Conservatism, an anti-Home Rule campaign was to be the vehicle by which party unity would be accomplished. To Tariff Reformers, the break-up of the United Kingdom would be but the first step in the dissolution and destruction of the British Empire. If Ireland were to gain freedom, other colonies would demand the same treatment. The Empire, instead of growing closer together, would become more separated; and

Britain would be weakened. Moreover, there were emotional ties between Ireland and England that defied rational explanation. The threatened severing of those ties was an impossible concept for many Unionists to grasp. The Home Rule issue was also to be the way by which the Liberals, or Radicals as Unionists preferred to call them, could be toppled from power. There was a genuine fear on the part of many Unionists that the policies of the Radical Government would, if pursued, inevitably destroy Great Britain. Bonar Law wrote, "My real belief is that in the troubles ahead of us connected with labour we are moving very fast in the direction of revolution...."[5] To him and to most Unionists, only the Unionist Party could "get the train for a time at least shifted on to other lines." Yet, as the result of the Parliament Act, no effective opposition to Liberal policies could be offered at Westminster. Therefore, the Unionists would have to appeal to a higher authority; public opinion would have to be altered to the point where the Liberals would have to call a general election.

Unfortunately, although Home Rule was potentially the best political issue for the Unionists, there was little interest by the electorate (except in Ireland) in an anti-Home Rule campaign. To stir the public from its apathy, the Unionists turned to a weapon which had been little used in the past--the Press. Under Bonar Law's leadership the Press was to become an important weapon, a tool for the persuasion of the voters. Once, Lord Salisbury had contemptuously dismissed the penny press as "written by office boys for office boys."[6] Bonar Law saw that the penny press reached millions more than the respectable but staid Conservative and Liberal newspapers. He grasped that the popular press offered lurid stories written in simple language for ill-educated readers. This style of reportage fit Bonar Law's rhetorical delivery perfectly. He made good copy; he was to use this attribute with great effect. With Bonar Law serving as their example, other Unionists likewise adopted the policy of giving forceful, slashing speeches against the Government in general and Home Rule in particular. The liberals were accused of trickery in politics, of having a spoils system created by the "Gaderine Swine", and of general incompetence, recklessness, and villainy.[7] Perhaps the most notorious statement was made by Bonar Law in a speech at Blenheim Palace on 27 July 1912. There he stated,

> I can imagine no length of resistance to which Ulster can go in which I should not be prepared to support them, and in which, in my belief, they would not be supported by the overwhelming majority of the British people.[8]

Liberal leaders excoriated the "new style", terming it "a complete grammar of anarchy",[9] but these retorts had little effect on Unionists rhetoric. It was accomplishing exactly that which it was supposed to.

By November 1912, the Unionist Party was rejuvenated and united as it had not been in years. However, as the result of a temporary reopening of the Tariff Reform controversy, the Unionist Party was again wracked by internal dissension. With virtually no opposition, final passage of the Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons was accomplished in January 1913. Although the Bill was promptly rejected by the House of Lords, there now remained only two more passages by the Commons for the Bill automatically to become law. The Unionist failure to delay or block Home Rule in Parliament meant that alternative methods of forcing the resignation of the Government would have to be found. Publicly, the campaign of vitriolic speeches was continued. Privately, Unionist leaders attempted to persuade the King to intervene if the Goverment refused to submit the issue to the electorate, a technically justifiable parliamentary maneuver albeit one that had fallen into disuse; the King, quite understandably, hesitated to do so. The Unionist public position was helped somewhat by the revelations of the Marconi Scandal, which apparently implicated certain Government Ministers in a financial scandal. But, regarding Home Rule, there was very little that the Unionists could actually do, and the second passage of the Home Rule Bill was accomplished in the summer of 1913. To Unionists, the Liberals were permitting Britain to drift towards chaos. Home Rule now needed but one more passage for it to become law. In Ulster and elsewhere, there were ominous warnings of civil war erupting if that were to happen.

A brief glimmer of hope appeared in the fall of 1913 when, as the result of a mutual misunderstanding (each thought the other had initiated the suggestion), the leaders of the major parties met secretly to discuss possible compromise. Asquith met first with Bonar Law and later with Edward Carson, the leader of the Ulster Unionists, in an effort to reach an understanding. Sadly, these talks failed. Both sides had die-hard wings that were adamantly opposed to compromise in any form; these could not be ignored. Neither side would or could offer what the other side could or would accept. Conference, a general election before or after the passage of the Home Rule Bill, Home Rule within Home Rule, veiled exclusion, naked exclusion--these solutions had been offered and rejected by one side or the other. The "unbridgeable chasm of principle"[10] of which Asquith spoke was a reality. The hatreds and fears generated by over thirty-five years of bitter political rivalry made meaningful negotiation between the Liberals and the Unionists nearly impossible. Tragically, compounding the problem of party bitterness was the antipathy that the Unionist and the Liberal leaders held each for the other. Their personalities clashed; their political styles were incompatible. Between them there could be no meaningful discussion of compromise.

For the third and final campaign against the Home Rule Bill, the Unionist Party was far stronger than it had been two years earlier. Reorganization and reorientation had effected a unity that had been missing for almost ten years. Still, the only issue with which the Party could defeat the Government was the anti-Home Rule campaign, and Home Rule was not an issue that stirred the electorate. The Ulster noises were helping to generate public interest; but the public wanted a settlement of the Crisis, not a continual barrage of threats from Ulster. Yet, as the discussions between the party leaders had demonstrated, a political settlement of the Crisis was unlikely. Moreover, the entire thrust of the anti-Home Rule movement had changed. When the campaign had begun, the Unionist Party leadership had controlled the tempo of actions throughout Great Britain. It was the leadership that had assigned topics of speeches, approved or rejected tactical maneuvers, and outlined party strategy. But as the campaign had dragged on, party leaders had gradually lost control over the overall direction. Unionists were united over their opposition to Home Rule, but they were disunited as to the method by which this opposition was to be demonstrated. Most, but not all, Unionists believed in the parliamentary system and hoped for a political settlement of the Crisis. Ulster Unionists, on the other hand, were determined that their demands were going to be met, with or without Unionist Party support.

Shortly after the opening of the 1914 Session of Parliament, the Government offered to Ulster temporary exclusion from an all-Ireland Parliament. This was contemptuously rejected by Carson when he made clear, in virtually flawless Unionist logic, that "Ulster wants this question settled now and for ever. We do not want sentence of death with a stay of execution for six years."[11] This seemingly moderate Liberal offer put the Unionists on the defensive. Liberal speakers spoke vigorously in favor of Asquith's proposal and castigated the Unionist rejection of the offer. Winston Churchill, at Bradford, on March 14, challenged the Unionists.

> If every concession that is made is spurned and exploited...If all the loose, wanton and reckless chatter we have been forced to listen to these months is in the end to disclose a sinister revolutionary purpose, then I can only say to you "Let us go forward and put these grave matters to the proof."[12]

The proof of which Churchill spoke was a show of force against Ulster which he and several others at the War Office were planning. The entire situation was drastically altered by an incident at the Curragh, a military camp outside Dublin. There, some cavalry officers, believing themselves to have been ordered north to attack Ulster, resigned; the "maneuvers" were hastily called off. The damage, however, had been done. To many Unionists, including Bonar Law, the Government, having proved itself corrupt by its "bargain"[13] with the Nationalists and by the Narconi Scandal, had now demonstrated a willingness to resort to extra-legal tactics. Liberal leaders had been guilty of a "pogrom plot" against Ulster; they would have to suffer the consequences.

By this time militants on both sides were beginning to chafe at restrictions that the constitutional system imposed. In England, Lord Alfred Milner, the great Imperial Proconsul, was organizing a movement which would, as he termed it, "*paralyze the arm* which might be raised to strike"[14] Ulster. The movement of which he wrote would be one that would aid in the arming and supplying of the Ulster Volunteer Force (U.V.F.), a paramilitary organization of 100,000 Ulstermen dedicated to the opposition of Home Rule. In the South of Ireland the Nationalists were finding it ever more difficult to restrain the inflamed passions of the militant Sinn Fein movement. The National Volunteers had been formed in imitation of the U.V.F. and had 180,000 Volunteers enrolled. Fortunately, none of these groups were armed with much more than broomsticks and a few sporting rifles. The gun-running at the Larne (April 24/25) changed this; Ulster was now armed. Ulster's threat of military resistance to Home Rule, if passed, could no longer be dismissed as an idle one. If Ulster were to be coerced, it would mean, at best, bloodshed, and, at worst, civil war.

The situation was now this. On the one hand, the Government was virtually powerless to act. The Incident at the Curragh and the Larne gun-running had left the Liberals with an Irish Home Rule Bill which was certain to become law but which would be almost impossible to impose on Ulster. On the other hand, the Unionists had been surprised by the Ulster actions but had supported them. Bonar Law, as were many other leaders, was all too aware of the significance of Ulster's actions; but there was apparently little that could be done to halt it. Now armed, Ulster seemed determine to go its way regardless of the strategy of the Unionist Party. In addition, Milner's extremist movement was gathering supporters who wanted to force the Government into acting against Ulster, hoping that this would bring about an adverse public reaction against the Government. Another die-hard movement was forming in the Lords, which, as one organizer described it, could have developed into a "diehard movement worse that 1911."[15] Despite this fractionalization the Unionist Party leaders were determined to maintain their demands regarding the amending of the Home Rule Bill. The goal of the Party was still to be a parliamentary settlement of the Ulster question, but not at the expense of certain fundamental principles. The result of this impasse between the two major parties could have been nothing but tragic for Britain's parliamentary system. Bonar Law told Austen Chamberlain, "I do not think that people generally realize how profoundly the social structure has been shaken by recent events."[16] Even with this awareness, however, Unionist leaders firmly believed that the Liberal Party was destroying the Constitution and that this deadly force had to be opposed. To them, if the Liberals were unwilling to consider "reasonable" alternatives, then whatever came to pass would be their responsibility.

Private meetings between party leaders were again held; once more these were unsuccessful. The Buckingham Conference of July was virtually a last resort; it, too, failed. There was virtually no hope for compromise; Home Rule would have to be enacted; Ulster would have to resist the enforcement of Home Rule. The future was bleak; bloodshed was almost a certainty. Compromise became an even remoter possibility when the Irish Volunteers staged a gun-running of their own. Now, there were two, partially armed, private armies in Ireland. Only the outbreak of war in Europe ended what the warring groups in Great Britain could not. With the German threat to Britain's security there was created a unanimity of purpose that transcended the pettiness of party politics.

The period covered by the Third Home Rule Crisis, 1912-1914, was one of great importance for the Unionist Party. In 1911 it had lacked unity, specific goals, and coordination of effort. Bonar Law's election to Unionist Leader in the House of Commons meant the elevation of a party man to the highest position in the Party. Politics was no longer something to be played at or dabbled in; it had become serious business. Bonar Law treated it as such. In an effort to obtain more efficiency for the Party, he frequently utilized the talents of Unionists with business backgrounds. These businessmen gradually revamped the Party into a party of the middle class. The Party that Bonar Law had inherited was demoralized and factionalized. Within three years solidarity had been attained and a new sense of purpose had been instilled. The method by which this had been accomplished was the exploitation of the Irish Home Rule controversy. Using the "new style" of public oratory, Law vigorously and incessantly assailed the Irish policy of the Liberal Government. This singleness of purpose rallied Unionists and instilled in them the hope that the Liberal-Nationalist coalition could be defeated. Party morale soared as Bonar Law forced the Liberals onto the defensive. Only when it became apparent that the parliamentary method was not succeeding did Bonar Law experience any trouble in managing the Party. Yet even in the last stages of the anti-Home Rule campaign, when it was obvious that Home Rule would be enacted and that civil war might break out over Ulster, he was still in control of the Party although not of Ulster. Ironically, at the end of World War I, when the Irish situation was finally disposed of, it was dealt with by a Coalition Government that was essentially Unionist. The Unionist Party had survived the war intact whereas the Liberal and the Nationalist Parties had not.

Although Unionist unity was attained and maintained, the constitutional system in Great Britain had suffered greatly. It is even possible that there might have been a civil war in Ireland had Home Rule been passed. How could such actions be justified? To many Unionists, the Liberal Government represented the force that was systematically wrecking the political, economic, religious, and social structures that were the foundations of Britain's greatness. If Britain were to be saved, this deadly force had to be opposed by whatever parliamentary tactic was most effective. As the Liberals had refused to abide by the standards of parliamentary responsibility--that is, had refused to pay heed to the rights of the minority--Unionists could hardly be expected to have done so either. Through this logic, the Unionist campaign of support for Ulster and of threats against the Government could be justified. This extreme interpretation of the "enemy" was buttressed by the "corrupt bargain" between the Liberals and the Nationalists which destroyed the ideals of parliamentary democracy, by the Marconi Scandal which branded the Government as corrupt liars, and by the Curragh Incident which indicated that the Liberals themselves were willing to destroy the constitutional system in order to achieve their goals. The Government was Radical, corrupt, and unconstitutional. Therefore, Bonar Law could, with an almost Cromwellian attitude, see his country poised on the brink of civil war and would not compromise his or his party's principles in order to stave off the disaster. It was as if the Unionists were willing to see Britain destroyed in order that Britain might be saved.

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1 This paper presents an overview of the most significant motives for Unionist actions during the Third Home Rule Crisis. For a complete discussion of the Crisis, see William S. Brockington, Jr., *The Unionist Party and Irish Home Rule: Andrew Bonar Law and the Irish Home Rule Crisis, 1912-1914*, unpublished dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1975.

2 House of Commons, *The Parliamentary Debates: Official Report*, Fifth Series (hereafter referred to as *CommonsDebates*), Vol. 65, Col. 897, 24 July 1914.

3 According to the Parliament Act, bills passed three times by the House of Commons over a period of two calendar years in three successive parliamentary sessions, would be sent directly to the King for his assent.

4 *Commons Debates*, Vol. 36, Col. 1525, 11 April 1912. Asquith to Bonar Law.

5 Bonar Law Papers (BL) 33/4/34. Bonar Law to Salisbury, 3 May 1912.

6 R.C.K. Ensor, England, 1870-1914, Vol. XIV of *The Oxford History of England*, ed. by G. N. Clark (15 Vols.; Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 313.

7 Bonar Law speech at the Albert Hall. *The Times*, 27 January 1912.

8 Bonar Law speech at Blenheim Palace. *The Times*, 28 July 1912.

9 Asquith speech at Ladybank. *The Times*, 7 October 1912.

10 Cabinet Papers. Asquith to George V, 17 September 1913.

11 *Commons Debates*, Vol. 59, Col. 937, 9 March 1914.

12 Churchill speech at Bradford. *The Manchester Guardian*, 16 March 1914.

13 The "bargain" which angered Unionists was the apparent deal between Nationalist and Liberal leaders. In return for Nationalist support for the Parliament Act, the Liberals introduced the Home Rule Bill. Unionists deemed this political deal "corrupt."

14 Quoted in Ian Colvin, The Life of Lord Carson, Vol. II (London: Victor Gollancz, 1934), p. 242.

15 BL 32/3/55. Lansdowne to Midleton (the organizer), 27 May 1914.

16 Austen Chamberlain, *Down the Years* (Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable, 1936), p. 645.

To Herald the Revolution: The Public Activities of G. V. Chicherin and Maksim Litvinov in Wartime Britain

by

William J. Lavery

In the long years from the Decembrist Uprising of 1825 to the drama of 1917, the Russian Revolution was an eagerly awaited and often predicted event. The fall of tsarism was sought in the West and Russian revolutionaries were listened to with great interest for many English liberals and radicals believed that the collapse of the Romanov dynasty might begin a new age of human freedom. Two men, Georgii Chicherin and Maksim Litvinov, were in a position to serve as heralds of the revolution in 1917, one acting as an harbinger and the other as a messenger to the British people. This paper, then, is concerned with their efforts to proclaim, first, the possibility of a revolution and second, to announce its existence.

In the long struggle with their autocracy, Russian revolutionaries often sought assistance from British progressives. They were rewarded with political asylum, financial aid, fraternal assistance, and favorable publicity.[1] A large number of prominent dissidents came to live in the United Kingdom including Aleksandr Herzen, Peter Kropotkin, and, more temporarily, Vladimir Lenin. World War I altered the situation dramatically for the Russian exile. Britain and Russia were allied against the Central Powers and by 1916 the struggle was not going well. English support for those exiles who still worked for the overthrow of tsarism proved to be a war casualty. The situation changed even more dramatically with the success of the March 1917 revolution. Now it seemed all Britons and Russians of good conscience could support the policies of the democratic Provisional Government. In November 1917 this regime was toppled by the Bolsheviks and it became apparent that Russia would quit the war. Ironically, it was at the point that the long-sought social revolution occurred that British support for the endeavor flagged.

Throughout the course of the World War two Russian exiles, Georgii Vasil'evich Chicherin and Maksim Maksimovich Litvinov, worked to explain and defend the goals of the Russian revolution. Neither received the sympathy of a large number of Britons but encountered hostility from the government, the trade unions, and a majority of elements of the political Left.

As the horrors of the war continued, an even larger number of European socialists came to oppose it. Lenin, the contentious leader of a small Russian socialist organization, appeared at the head of the anti-war movement beginning with the Zimmerwald Conference of September 1915.[2] His position on the war had been stated unequivocably from the onset: the war was imperialistic and all imprisoned for his anti-war work, Chicherin was appointed the Soviet ambassador to Britain in late November. This was a most transparent ploy to free Chicherin for the Soviets carefully mentioned the possibility of reprisals against English diplomatic personnel in Russia. According to Trotskii, Chicherin had been interned for anti-war agitation and it was entirely appropriate for the Bolsheviks to arrest the English ambassador for pro-war sentiments. The manuever succeeded, although at considerable cost in Soviet "popularity" in London, and Chicherin was exchanged for Sir George Buchanan on January 2, 1918. His efforts to herald the revolution had prevented him from being permitted to represent it in England.

The task of proclaiming and explaining the Bolshevik experiment fell to a very different sort of Bolshevik than Chicherin. Maksim Litvinov had been a staunch supporter of Lenin since 1902. He had assisted in the organization and delivery of every Leninist newspaper from *Iskra* to *Proletarii*. In 1906 he attempted to purchase and smuggle massive quantities of weapons into Russia. His career as an active Bolshevik had come to an end in January 1908 with his arrest in Paris in connection with the notorious June 1907 Tiflis bank expropriation. Banished to England, Litvinov was required to remain politically inactive. He cultivated no contacts with the British Left and was completely unknown to native war protestors.

He differed from Chicherin in social origin and intellectual tastes. Born into a lower-middle class Jewish merchant family living in the Pale, Litvinov did not attend a university; he was converted to socialism within the Russian army. He did not like nor did he trust socialist intellectuals. After observing the February 1915 London Conference of Inter-Allied Socialists, Litvinov informed Lenin that the Independent Labour Party was an insecure ally for the Bolsheviks in their campaign to create a new international. It was pacifistic on the question of the war and showed no interest in converting the international struggle into a series of class-oriented civil wars. He considered the British Socialist Party a weak partner, too, torn as it was by a "defeatist-defencist" schism.[16] In fact, after seven years in Britain Litvinov could not endorse a single group, newspaper, or individual as sufficiently militant for the Bolsheviks.[17] These feelings were reciprocated as a passage from the diary of Beatrice Webb makes clear:

> Litvinov lunched with us on Wednesday; he had written asking whether he could call. He is an anglicized Russian Jew of unprepossessing appearance - but with a certain honest sturdiness...He is not a bad sort — a crude Marxist in his views....He believes in Government by the "Proletariat" and does not believe the English race capable of it.[18]

A more subtle indication of Litvinov's anonymity appeared in a January 1918 issue of the British Socialist Party newspaper *The Call*. Most of the article dealt with the current activities of Chicherin, "our good comrade and member", within the Soviet foreign office. Litvinov, then the Russian Peoples' Ambassador, was merely described as having "worked closely in contact with us."[19] This unfamiliarity would cost him dearly in his 1918 mission as the representative of a new Soviet regime.

On January 3, 1918, Litvinov received his appointment as Russian Peoples' Ambassador in Great Britain in a most unorthodox and indirect manner: he read about it in his morning newspaper. Apart from an order to secure possession of all Russian governmental premises, funds, and files, the newest Soviet diplomat was given no specific instructions. For much of the crucial times between his appointment and the signing of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk on March 3, 1918, Litvinov would be forced to improvise a foreign policy.[20]

In the course of his mission, Litvinov tried to explain Soviet foreign and internal policies to the British government, the left-of-center English press, and the trade union movement. The difficulties of acting as an ambassador and an as information bureau were not completely apparent to him in January 1918. For nine months he negotiated with the Foreign Office, quarreled with the diplomatic remnants of the Provisional Government, and attempted to represent the interests of Russians in Great Britain. Indeed, the archives of the Foreign Office demonstrate that the bulk of his time was concerned with representing the position of his government to the British authorities. But, certainly the most visible and controversial of his actions was his press campaign.

From the very beginning Litvinov believed that his mission had a dual character, defending Russian state interests but also serving as a source of information on the Soviet experiment for the British public. His attempts to reach local workers and leftist organizations soon angered the Foreign Office. Intending to create a favorable popular image of the new regime, Litvinov perceived his statements to be non-ideological and non-revolutionary. The British Cabinet and Foreign Office did not accept Litvinov's point of view. Their primary concern was to win the war against the Central Powers and anything that hampered efforts to win the conflict would be viewed as seditious. Thus, Litvinov's explanations of Soviet efforts to leave the war came to be labelled "revolutionary".[21]

Although a number of liberal and left-wing newspapers initially expressed an interest in Litvinov's cause, Litvinov was not able to fully utilize these opportunities partly because of the censorship provisions of the Defense of the Realm Act (D.O.R.A.), and partly because he had not participated in English radical life. In short, Litvinov's press campaign was too diminutive to sway English opinion but large enough to alarm the British government.

Litvinov faced a formidable task in altering the prevailing public image of the Bolshevik government. Many Englishmen believed the Bolsheviks to be paid German agents, while the late Provisional Government was viewed as a viable and democratic regime protecting English political and financial interests. The Bolsheviks, in contrast, were believed ready to seize all British holdings in Russia. On January 5, he granted his first interview to an English paper, *The Daily News and Leader*. Here at the beginning of his mission he made a determined effort to disarm English opposition to the initial peace talks between the Soviets and the Central Powers without adopting a stance that could be interpreted as in favor of continuing the war. At this time Litvinov noted:

> Whatever the outcome may be, we (the Bolshevik government) shall not be the losers. Either we shall obtain a just democratic peace, or the shamelessness and arrogance of the rulers of the Central Powers will be exposed to the naked eyes of their peoples. We hope that the peoples of the Central Powers will soon strike and strike hard against the attitude of their rulers.[22]

The next week saw him placing a more significant statement in British papers. He succeeded in publishing Trotsky's "theses" on the war. The always quotable Bolshevik Commissar of Foreign Affairs had written that the war was not fought to free Belgium, Serbia, and France since the Central Powers had stated that they would evacuate these areas after a peace was signed. Trotsky challenged the Allied governments to apply the doctrine of national self-determination urged on the Central Powers to Ireland, Egypt, India, Madagascar and Indochine. Should the Allied governments reject their subjects demand for peace, the West European working classes then had "the iron necessity of grasping the authority from the hands of those who cannot, or will not give peace to the peoples."[23] Trotsky may have raised valid points in his theses but it was impolitic of Litvinov to submit them to the English papers for publication.

Several papers also published Litvinov's article "To the Workers of Great Britain" which stated the purpose of his English mission. He wrote that his government had ordered him to communicate the desires and hopes of Russian revolutionary democracy to the British, while gathering information on the English democratic movement. His first duty, however, was to furnish the "truth" about the Russian revolution and to expose the Russian middle-class's "secret" desire for an annexationist victory while telling the Russian people that they were seeking peace. Litvinov emphasized the basic social reforms instituted by the Soviets despite the chaos caused by the war. These included homes for the homeless, lands for the peasants, the eight hour work day, and the exposure of the secret treaties.[24] Litvinov noted with alarm that international capitalism, not just the Russian conservatives, had retaliated against the new regime. If the war continued, he predicted, the Russian revolution was doomed and militarism would triumph everywhere in Europe. Therefore, the Russian workers in fighting for their revolution were fighting English labor's battles, too. While Litvinov clearly had not asked the British proletariat to revolt, his advice for them to join the Russian workers' peace efforts would have disrupted British governmental policies.[25]

In an interview given to the *Manchester Guardian*, Litvinov explained to that paper's wider and more ideologically diverse readership that widespread suspicion existed in Russia that the Allies were prepared to sacrifice that country to the Germans in exchange for an end to the war in the West. Pointing out that Prime Minister David Lloyd George had not disavowed annexation as a war aim, Litvinov emphasized that his government was not interested in a separate peace but hoped that the Allied governments would participate in a general conference to end the war.[26]

Litvinov had badly overstepped his prerogatives in this press campaign and the elements of the English government who opposed his presence in London were swift to react. On January 12 Sir George Cave, the Home Secretary and thus the highest police official in Britain, circulated a secret report on Bolshevik propaganda for Cabinet discussion. Cave thought that *The Herald* was liable to prosecution under the provisions of the D.O.R.A. for publishing Litvinov's and Trotsky's materials. However, since other leftist papers as well as the conservative *Daily News* and *Westminster Gazette* also published or alluded to the offensive materials, prosecution appeared unwise. Cave finished his report with a recommendation that Litvinov be threatened with expulsion if the offending articles continued, that Litvinov's mail be monitored by the postal authorities, that the newspapers be threatened with future action, and that the Cabinet seriously consider a campaign to disseminate counter-propaganda within England.[27]

In early February, Litvinov made the most serious error in his press campaign. To this point he had concentrated his efforts to place material in the readily identifiable leftist press. But now he sent a declaration from the "International Bureau of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Government" entitled "To the Workers of Britain, France, and Italy" to *The Woolwich Pioneer and Labour Journal.* Woolwich is a working class area lying along the Thames in the southeastern part of London and is the site of the huge royal munitions factory. The local newspaper was moderate in hue, devoted to reporting the births, deaths, and accidents of the community. The one exceptional feature was the energetic radical editorialist, "Freelance", who, on February 8, opened his column to Litvinov. The appearance of Litvinov's now-familiar articles in a town dominated by the Woolwich Arsenal provoked a sharp reaction.

"Freelance" published Litvinov's brief request for space along with a declaration from the All-Russian Soviet. While Litvinov had not written anything that can be construed as a direct call to revolution, the declaration asserted that "without a social revolution there can be no peace."[28] The Kerenskii government had fallen because it had linked the interests of the Russian middle class to those of the Entente capitalists. The Russian proletariat had taken the first steps and now they expected the European workers to begin the revolution by struggling for peace and self-determination for all colonies.

The War Cabinet took notice of the article in its next session. An unidentified member referred to it as "inciting the munitions workers...to revolution."[29] Balfour replied that Litvinov was going to be warned and the British charge in Petrograd was instructed to inform the Bolsheviks that Litvinov's propaganda activities were intolerable.[30] Litvinov received his warning from the Foreign Office on February 12; he was told that the English had no desire to sever relations, but that they would not tolerate his propaganda because of the war.

The *Woolwich Pioneer* article clearly revealed the different interpretations given the words "revolution" and "propaganda" by Litvinov and the Foreign Office. The Bolshevik diplomat and his British liaison had unusually sharp exchanges. Litvinov brushed aside the warning given him and said that "I have to explain to the British people and to the working class...the point of view of the Russian working class with regard to the present war and international situation."[31] He asserted that the attacks upon his government by the English "reactionary press" made his activities vital. Litvinov conceded that the statements of the Soviet government when contrasted with Allied war policies became indictments of the British authorities, but he strongly rejected any interpretation that criticism of Allied policy equalled an incitement to revolution. He told the Foreign Office that he often declined invitations to meetings in areas where labor problems were known to be acute. In this acrimonious session, Litvinov's parting comments did nothing to soothe the British government:

> Since I am not recognized in full measure as the diplomatic representative of my country, I naturally feel that I enjoy more freedom in the way of publicity than I would otherwise. At the same time I must mention to you that I have absolutely

> irrefutable proof of propaganda carried on both here and in Russia by the British authorities, and more importantly by the Foreign Office against the Bolshevik Government.[32]

Litvinov did have access to working class leadership by way of the large public meeting. In late January 1918 Litvinov was invited to address the annual Labour Party Conference in Nottingham. The important meeting always attracted an impressive list of guest speakers, and Litvinov was to share the rostrum with Jean Longuet of the French Socialist Party and Camille Huysmans of the Belgium Labor Party. In his presentation, Litvinov noted that he represented no ordinary government, but the first government of the working classes. He told the Labourites not to believe that power had been usurped by a band of conspirators, for the people had accomplished this revolution. The revolt was not directed against the conduct of the war, but against the war itself. On the subject of Brest-Litovsk, Litvinov stated that the negotiations placed the German people on the spot; they now could end the war or continue it purely for territorial gain.[33] Given a warm reception by the delegates, the moderate speech was interpreted in wartime England as a grave risk to British security. The London *Daily Express* called it "the most menacing speech ever delivered by the Ambassador of a friendly country."[34]

Now the Home Office began to curtail Litvinov's public activities to limit his influence. Even before the Nottingham conference Scotland Yard had raided the offices of the British Socialist Party, confiscating a pamphlet entitled "Russia's Appeal: Will British Labour Remain Silent?", which Litvinov planned to distribute at the conference.[35]

The last of Litvinov's public appearances occurred at the end of February amid rumors of an impending treaty between the Bolsheviks and the Central Powers. He addressed a meeting of the British Socialist Party in London. Despite his earlier and private deprecation of the B.S.P., Litvinov described the Bolsheviks and them as closely linked in ideas and personnel.* Again taking up the volatile subject of Soviet-German negotiations, Litvinov claimed that the Bolsheviks had achieved the aims of the 1915 Zimmerwald conference to end the war. Arguing that "the Russian Revolution had done its duty to the International and that the International must now do its duty to the Russian Revolution", he blamed the "opportunistic" Socialist Party of Germany for thwarting the peace movement in that country.[36] He was saddened, he said, to see that the S.P.D. was not the only European socialist party making common cause with their bourgeois governments against the Bolsheviks. It has become increasingly clear to all "true democrats", he concluded, that militarism would be eliminated only when capitalism was finished.

At this point British governmental and press opposition to Litvinov triumphed. On February 28, Lord Robert, the Minister of Blockade, stated that Litvinov by publishing anti-war materials had intervened in internal British affairs and that the government would not protect him from press attacks, as Ramsay MacDonald wished.[37] On March 1, Sir George Cave issued the stiffest warning to Litvinov. Describing the Bolshevik as the unrecognized ambassador

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*Litvinov was accurate here since Chicherin, Peter Petrov, Joseph Fineberg, and Theodore Rothstein were all members of the B.S.P. and the Bolsheviks.

of an unrecognized regime primarily engaged in propaganda ventures, Cave revealed that the government was issuing an Order in Council forbidding any alien from addressing public meetings or distributing material not specifically approved by the Home Secretary.[38] Litvinov was forced to heed this warning, and it terminated any effective action he could conduct in England. His position had become so tenuous that he did not feel secure enough to attend the annual B.S.P. conference, although that organization had staunchly supported him since his appointment. On March 31, he merely sent his greetings to the congress.[39] He had ceased to function as the spokesman of the Russian revolution in England.

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1 For information on the variety of aid furnished to Russians living in British exile see Michael Futrell, *Northern Underground: Episodes of Russian Revolutionary Transport and Communications through Scandinavia and Finland, 1863-1917* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), James W. Hulse, *Revolutionists in London: a Study of Five Unorthodox Socialists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), and, Walter Kendall, *The Revolutionary Movement in Britain, 1900-1921: the Origins of British Communism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969)

2 For information on the struggles within European socialist parties over the question of participation in the war see Merle Fainsod, *International Socialism and the World War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935). The turmoil within the Russian party can be appreciated in Olga Hess Gankin and Harold H. Fisher, *The Bolsheviks and the World War: the Origin of the Third International* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1940.)

3 "Lenin's Theses on the War", September 5 or 6, 1914. *Leninskii sbornik*, XIV, pp. 10-12. As translated in Gankin and Fischer, pp. 140-143.

4 G. Tehitcherin, "The Russian Political Prisoners' and Exiles' Relief Committee in London," Leaflet No. 3, *A.S.E.* (Amalgamated Society of Engineers) *Journal* (London), 1915, p. 8.

5 "O" (Chicherin) *Nashe slovo* (Paris), No. 194, September 18, 1915.

6 *The Railway Review* (London), August 20, 1915.

7 *The Labour Leader* (London), November 11, 1915.

8 *Parliamentary Debate: Official Report*. Fifth series, LXC, August 9, 1916, p. 1152.

9 During the World War Chicherin served as the London correspondent for Iulii Martov's series of Menshevik-Internationalist newspapers. For information on *Golos*, *Nashe slovo*, and *Nachalo*, see Alfred Erich Senn, "The Politics of *Golos* and *Nashe slovo*", *International Review of Social History*, 1973, 3, 675-705.

10 These included the *Labour Leader*, the organ of the Independent Labour Party; the *Cotton Factory Times* (Manchester); the *Railway Review;* and, *The Call* (London), the British Socialist Party newspaper.

11 *The Call*, January 4, 1917.

12 Chicherin's attitude toward the Provisional Government is clearly revealed in his comment: "I see no difference between Alexandra Feodorovna (the ex-tsarina) and Alexander Feodorovitch (Kerenskii)." Constantin D. Nabokoff, *Ordeals of a Diplomat* (London: Duckworth, 1921), p. 105.

13 See the information given in the House of Commons, *Parliamentary Debate*, C, December 18, 1917, pp. 1818-1819.

14 V. I. Lenin, *Polnoe sobranie sochineniia*, 5th ed. (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1958-). XXVII (1962), pp. 294-295.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 450-451.

16 Letter from M. M. Litvinov to V. I. Lenin and N. K. Krupskaia, February 18, 1915. "Neopublikovannye pis'ma M. M. Litvinov i V. I. Lenina, 1913-1915gg.", *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia*, 1966, 4, 122.

17 *Ibid.*

18 Beatrice Webb, *Beatrice Webb's Diaries, 1912-1924* (London: Longman and Green, 1952), pp. 105-106.

19 See *The Call*, January 18, 1918.

20 Information on Litvinov's attitude toward his mission can be gained from Ivan Maisky, *Journey into the Past* (London: Hutchison, 1962), pp. 62-63.

21 With the exception of the Adolf Ioffe mission to Germany, the author has uncovered no evidence of Soviet subversive activities involving their diplomatic personnel prior to the Allied intervention in the Russian civil war.

22 *The Daily News and Leader* (London), January 5, 1918.

23 *The Herald*, January 12, 1918. Also, *The Call*, January 10, 1918, and *The Cotton Factory Times*, January 11, 1918.

24 Litvinov's information on these alleged reforms probably came from the newspapers Chicherin had sent him in January. The British Foreign Office records do not reveal any radio messages that might have carried this information.

25 *The Cotton Factory Times*, January 11, 1918, and, *The Herald*, January 12, 1918.

26 *Manchester Guardian*, January 12, 1918.

27 Sir George Cave, "Bolshevik Propaganda: A Secret Report", Cabinet Papers 24, G.T. 3329, January 12, 1918. Public Record Office, London.

28 *The Pioneer and Labour Journal* (Woolwich), February 8, 1918. Also, *The Cotton Factory Times*, February 8, 1918.

29 War Cabinet meeting of February 11, 1918. CAB.23 (342-14).

30 See the telegram of Lord Curzon to Lindley (Petrograd), February 11, 1918. Foreign Office Papers 371/3299/31794. Public Records Office, London.

31 Letter of R. A. Leeper to Arthur J. Balfour concerning a conversation with Maxim Litvinov, February 13, 1918. F. O. 371/3298/28849.

32 *Ibid.*

33 *The Times*, January 23, 1918.

34 *The Daily Express* (London), January 23, 1918.

35 *Manchester Guardian*, January 21, 1918. Letter from Albert Inkpin, Secretary of the British Socialist Party to the editors.

36 *The Call*, February 28, 1918.

37 *The Times*, February 28, 1918.

38 *Ibid.*, March 1, 1918. This coincided with the end of the Brest Litovsk negotiations.

39 *Ibid.*, April 1, 1918.

Some observations

1) There is more similarity between Litvinov's 1918 diplomatic mission and Chicherin's 1914-1917 efforts than between the 1918 mission and subsequent early Soviet diplomatic campaigns.

2) In contrast with Walter Kendall who speaks of a consistent Soviet policy there was not Soviet effort--during the tenure of Chicherin or Litvinov as "ambassadors"--to subvert or covertly manipulate English affairs.

3) However, the question of a Russian withdrawal from the war was interpreted by the British Government as subversive in itself.

4) The Litvinov mission had not been forced on the British Government. They wanted to place an agent of their own within Russia and Litvinov was the necessary *quid pro quo*. An examination of the evidence reveals that Litvinov was not supported by his government in his quest for parity with the Lockhart mission.

5) It became clear that the English left-wing would support Russian revolutionary efforts to obtain human rights, but would not endorse the cause of social revolution and class-warfare.

WILLIAM W. BOYCE:
A LEADER OF THE SOUTHERN PEACE MOVEMENT

by

Roger P. Leemhuis

William Waters Boyce (1818-1890) was a prominent South Carolina Democrat, known mainly for his efforts, as a Confederate Congressman, to promote a negotiated peace. Born in Charleston, he attended South Carolina College and the University of Virginia, opened a law practice in Winnsboro, Fairfield District, in 1841, was a farmer, and served for one term (1846-1847) in the state legislature. On the eve of the Civil War he owned twenty-seven slaves and an estate valued at over fifty-eight thousand dollars.[1]

He is historically interesting, because he was typical of South Carolina politicians during the 1850's, and because he became controversial during the Civil War. Boyce was a wealthy planter and man of stature, a conservative who wanted to maintain unity and stability in a slaveholding society.

In response to the Compromise of 1850, South Carolina was favorable to disunion. Opinion divided mainly between cooperationists and proponents of separate state secession. (The small minority of unionists sided with the cooperationists.) Boyce was a cooperationist who desired a Southern confederacy, although he did not regard the Compromise as particularly offensive. He did believe that there existed signs of Northern antagonism which warranted the South's departure from the Union.[2]

Campaigning against separate action, he warned that a lone withdrawal would bring isolation and economic ruin. His arguments revealed anxiety about the racial equilibrium. In his words, separate secession would accelerate white emigration to the West. The slaves would be cut off from the Western market, and the racial balance would be upset.[3]

The drive against separate secession succeeded, and when Boyce won his first election to the United States Congress in 1853, the disunionist agitation had subsided. His constituency, which had a slave majority, embraced the election districts of York, Chester, Fairfield, Kershaw, Richland, and Sumter, in the central part of the state. Regularly re-elected without opposition, he served in Washington until December 1860.[4]

During the antebellum years his position on most issues reflected a large segment of public opinion in the state. The Winnsboro legislator supported the Kansas Nebraska Act of 1854, and for two years after its passage he urged a vigorous Southern offensive in Kansas. Boyce evidently did not think that the South's posture towards Kansas was beligerent and provocative. In 1855 he declared that his section was asserting its "rights in the Union." He also hoped that conservative Northerners would support the South's claim to "equality" in the territories.[5]

Except for his call for a forceful Southern stand in Kansas, he was, during his years in Washington, temperate on sectional questions. Deprecating extremism, he speculated in 1854 that disunion would bring long and bloody wars. Like most South Carolina politicians, he was a conditioned unionist, and like the late John C. Calhoun, he was a "marx of the master class." In an 1854 speech Boyce warned that the abolitionists' pursuit of the higher law and natural rights ideas would provoke a race war. Blacks would perish, Southern whites would suffer, and the convulsions would spread to the North. Should the higher law theory become popular among Northern laborers, all property interests would be imperiled. "It is surprising that the property-holders of the North do not see the dangerous consequences involved in the higher-law principle of the slavery agitation."[6]

He wanted conservatives to rule everywhere and protect slavery. In an 1855 speech he interpreted the slavery question as chiefly a social issue, affecting poor and rich alike. "It involves the question; shall we remain as we are, the advanced guard of civilization, enjoying the greatest amount of its blessings, and the least of its evils, or shall we run the hazards of another St. Domingo?"[7] The Congressman argued that the prosperity of the civilized world was tied to slavery. Moreover, he occasionally taunted the North for its apparent social fragility, commenting that workers' strikes and disturbances occurred only under a free labor system.[8]

In his desire for social concord, Boyce wanted the country's population to remain stationary. Wishing to avoid any increase in the black population, he attacked the movement to legalize the foreign slave trade. He spoke against homestead legislation, stating that it would invite increased immigration, "too soon to bring upon us all the evils of a vast population."[9]

The same outlook led him to resist the Democratic party's expansionist foreign policy. He believed that the acquisition of new lands would place an intolerable strain upon the country. When Cuban annexation was debated, the Winnsboro representative declared that "we do not need any more space." He also used the racist argument that the Cuban blacks, whites, and mulattoes were unfit for assimilation into the American society.[10]

Boyce complained that the South was subsidizing the North's prosperity through the protective tariff, and he adhered strongly to laissez-faire economics. Yet he regarded the defense of slavery as the South's main concern, and he wanted his section to be united as it faced the antislavery threat.[11]

In South Carolina, a one-party Democratic state, he did not affiliate with either of the two major factions--the National Democrats or the Southern Rights Democrats. The former, led by Congressman James L. Orr of Anderson, favored close ties with the national party as the most effective means to insure continued union under Democratic party rule. The latter, led by Robert Barnwell Rhett, Maxcy Gregg, and Congressmen Lawrence Keitt and John McQueen, regarded disunion as inevitable and would put no faith in national parties. Holding the balance between these two wings were many uncommitted

Democrats, who were generally conditional unionists. Among them were Boyce, James H. Hammond, and James Chesnut, Jr.[12]

The Winnsboro legislator contended that more intimate bonds with the national organization would restrict the state's freedom of action. Besides, he maintained, South Carolina was not obligated to the national party. Many Northern Democrats, he noted, had failed to stand by the Kansas-Nebraska Act after voting for it. Except in those Northwestern states where Stephen A. Douglas' influence was great, the Northern Democrats "dodged" the issue. The Congressman apparently had friendly relations with Douglas. When the Illinois senator formed a syndicate for a real estate venture in northern Wisconsin in the early 1850's, Boyce was one of the purchasers of shares.[13]

He opposed the National Democrats' campaign to secure South Carolina's presence at the 1856 Democratic national convention in Cincinnati. His position did not prevail, and the state send delegations to the 1856 and 1860 national gatherings.[14] Although Boyce shared the Southern Rights faction's conviction that the Northern Democrats were undependable friends of the South, he did, as a conditional unionist, wish to see the Democrats retain power in Washington. He suggested that a state convention endorse President Franklin Pierce for a second term in 1856, contending that such action would preserve "our political individuality."[15]

Desire for social stability influenced his opposition to the National Democrats in South Carolina. He frankly feared a levelling democracy, which would supposedly be stimulated by a rivalry between national parties in the state.[16]

> Further, if we wish to cherish the conservatism of the State, preserve existing forms and checks and compromises, we should above all things avoid fusion with a great national party, because in the fierce struggle for power between the different national parties--for as I have said, we will have more than one--it will soon become necessary to appeal to the fierce democratic spirit, and seek to govern from below, upwards.

By the middle 1850's the Congressman became decidely pessimistic about the future of the Union. The country's growth had been so great, he remarked, that a weakening of the Union's cohesive force was unavoidable. Heightening his gloom was a fear that the Republican party, which he viewed as anti-Southern, would eventually gain power. He wanted the South to curb the Republican appeal by convincing the North that the slave states were peaceful and nonaggressive. However, should the North turn to the Republicans even while the South was moderate, then the Southern people "will be satisfied that they have nothing further to hope from the North." The sensitive issues that Boyce wanted his section to avoid were demands for a legalized foreign slave trade and a slave code for the territories. He was satisfied to leave the slavery question "where the Constitution and the Dred Scott decision now place it."[17]

As the 1860 election approached he became uneasy. Early in the year he wrote of a general drift towards disunion, yet he doubted that "the Southern mind" was prepared for drastic measures. Before Christopher G. Memminger travelled to Virginia in January, with instructions from the South Carolina legislature to promote a cooperationist program, Boyce cautioned him not to be overbearing. He advised Memminger to give the impression that South

Carolina would follow Virginia's lead, by remaining in or leaving the Union.[18]

While anticipating secession, he clung to his hope that the Union would be preserved. Pleading that the South "give no pretext" for the election of a Republican, he also warned that the Republicans, by expounding their "theory of irrepressible conflict" between the free and slave labor systems, were driving the South to desperation. Insisting that Republican victory in 1860 would justify immediate secession, Boyce was confident that the slave section would react affirmatively to South Carolina's initiative. A cooperationist in the past, he joined such disunionists as Keitt, McQueen, and Governor William Gist in demanding separate state secession. After Lincoln's election he called for immediate and decisive steps.[19]

In his social and political conservatism, in his militant defense of slavery and uncompromising racism, in his opposition to expansion and to protective tariffs, in his stance on the Democratic party, in his conditional unionism, in his resolve that the South should not tolerate Republican rule, Boyce was a typical and highly articulate South Carolina politician of the 1850's[20]

In 1860 the Winnsboro representative had been a reluctant secessionist, wishing to avoid disunion but regarding it as the necessary response to Lincoln's election. Cautious and conservative, he had been hesitant in the prewar years to pursue radical measures which might disturb the social peace. He regretted the circumstances that led to the Civil War. Yet when war came he wanted to wage it effectively. If the South could not secure its independence on the battlefield, he finally reasoned, it should use diplomatic means to achieve the same goal. Boyce had the mind of a guerrilla fighter.

He sat in the Provisional, First, and Second Congresses of the Confederacy. Frequently critical of Jefferson Davis, he did support some major administration measures, among them revenue legislation and the 1865 decision to arm the slaves. He usually opposed suspension of *habeas corpus*, and he voted against the early conscription laws, preferring instead a system of state quotas, but he voted for the 1864 draft law.[21]

In early 1862 he spoke out for more aggressive Southern fighting, while privately he lamented that Confederate failure to advance boldly had jeopardized chances of winning the border states; for this failure he blamed Davis. As the war progressed the Carolinian came to doubt the wisdom of continued fighting. In the spring of 1862 he privately expressed misgivings about Confederate military prospects.[22]

He favored diplomatic initiatives that might distract the enemy, and he voted for various proposals for negotiations, with Southern independence as a condition. In early 1863 he joined fellow South Carolinian William Porcher Miles and others in suggesting an alliance with the Northwestern states of the Union. On February 6, 1863, Boyce introduced a resolution asking Davis to send a secret agent to Canada to promote such a connection.[23]

He was prominent in the Congressional peace party. Among the others were Tennessee Representative Henry S. Foote and Senators John Watson of Mississippi, William A. Graham of North Carolina, James L. Orr of South Carolina, and

Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia. Many Southerners viewed the Winnsboro legislator as the head of the peace movement. However, the Congressional peace party had no recognized single leader and was casually organized.[24]

By the late summer of 1864 Boyce concluded that prolonged hostilities would ruin the South. In his words, Davis' "intermeddling with the armies is usually disastrous, and he has no diplomacy." The Union president he considered an unrelenting foe, and he believed that Lincoln's defeat in the November 1864 election would offer the South's only hope. The Carolinian reckoned that the South could undercut Lincoln by proposing an armistice and a congress of all Northern and Southern states. If Lincoln accepted the offer, "we might have peace as the fruit. If he declined it absolutely, or accepted it with impossible conditions, a reaction might set in against him strong enough to sweep him overboard in the Presidential election."[25]

Boyce doubted that Davis would make such an overture unless public opinion forced him. In October 1864 the Congressman publicized his scheme in an open letter to Davis. He urged the Confederate president to aid the Northern Democrats by proposing an armistice and a convention of all states. The letter pictured a military despotism emerging in the South, and it warned that "a peace without reconciliation" would fasten upon both sides permanent war machines.[26]

The idea of a convention of Union and Confederate states was not new. It had been discussed throughout the war, and several politicians, among them Vice-President Alexander Stephens and Governor Joseph E. Brown, both of Georgia, were sympathetic. It was Boyce who openly approached Davis with the convention concept. The result of his boldness was a more earnest public consideration of the question.[27]

His action was courageous, and he became controversial. The letter writer encountered a largely negative response; his suggestion actually provoked declarations of support for Davis. In South Carolina the controlling political group, which represented the planter aristocracy, feared that the plan might promote reconstruction of the old Union. On October 17, a mass meeting in Columbia approved a resolution demanding the Congressman's resignation. Facing the unfriendly crowd, Boyce maintained that his plan was "best calculated to defeat the North, by building up a peace party in that section." Writing the open letter to davis subjected him to personal risk. "I am told there is a man in this crowd who has said he would kill me tonight."[28]

The plan's sponsor denied charges that he was encouraging defeatism and reunion. Shortly after the Columbia meeting he stated that Southern delegates to his proposed convention should be committed against reconstruction. In Winnsboro on November 7, he visualized the opportunities open to the Confederacy should the Northern Democrats win the election. While Lincoln's successor sought an armistice, as the Democratic platform obliged him, the South could reopen its closed ports; sympathetic foreign nations would be able to intervene. Noting the numerical superiority of the Union, Boyce wanted to divide the enemy by strengthening the Northern Democrats.[29]

The allusion to the North's numerical edge aroused anger. Several days later the Representative stated, "I by no means desired or intended to express the opinion that we could no longer continue the contest." By citing the enemy's numerical advantage, he replied, he was trying to foster a policy that would disintegrate the enemy. However, in the previous month he had privately written, "If the war goes on we are ruined. We lose both slavery and freedom."[30]

In spite of the denunciations that he faced in Columbia, there were signs of support for Boyce. One gathering passed a resolution rejecting reconstruction but urging the full use of diplomacy to end the conflict.[31]

On November 21, the Winnsboro legislator voted for a House resolution, unanimously passed, that the Confederacy would accept no peace short of independence. On December 2, he backed a call for a Southern convention or, as an alternative, a council of state commissioners who would advise the Richmond government on matters of war and peace. This proposal, presented by Foote, was overwhelmingly defeated.[32]

Davis outmaneuvered the peace party by agreeing to the Hampton Roads conference of early February 1865. As he expected, this meeting of Union and Confederate leaders was abortive, and Davis gained support for his view that peace talks offered no hope. Boyce the peace advocate was now silenced. When the Confederacy collapsed he advised his constituents to acquiesce in the war's outcome.[33]

The former Congressman, like most Southern politicians, became anxious to see civil governments restored in his section. In June 1865 he spoke out for a conciliatory attitude towards the conqueror, acceptance of the end of slavery, and kind treatment of the blacks. Before President Andrew Johnson appointed Benjamin F. Perry provisional governor in June, Boyce was prominently mentioned for the position, and he received a presidential pardon.[34]

There were elements of opportunism and wisdom in his positions on postwar issues. His opinion of the democratic reform movement, which he had opposed in the past, changed drastically. Johnson, a longtime antagonist of the Southern aristocracy, now sat in the White House, and Boyce was courting the president's favor. In letters to Johnson he proposed the creation of "a people's State." Before Perry's appointment was announced, Boyce urged the president to rely upon James L. Orr and himself to establish a loyal government and guide the reform process. "He and I acting together could answer for this State, and be of more service to you than any number of other people could be." The Winnsboro politician was disappointed by his failure to obtain a leadership role. In the fall he ran unsuccessfully for the United States Senate.[35]

Skeptical about the future of Southern race relations, Boyce called for friendship between Southern and Northern whites. The blacks he considered indolent and improvident, unlikely to succeed as free laborers. In his mind, the region's prosperity required black colonization and white immigration. "Receive immigrants from Europe and the United States with open arms." In late 1865 he predicted a reduction in the plantation work forces, with much black unemployment resulting. He wanted the United States to establish agencies at every Southern court house to ascertain what blacks were idle. He proposed that federal officials then relocate them on plantations "in the extreme South."[36]

On issues of civil and political rights for blacks, Boyce was more liberal than most white South Carolinians in 1865. He wanted the freedom to enjoy "perfect equality and justice before the law," but he opposed a universal black suffrage as a condition for Southern representation in Congress. Privately he favored for both races a qualified suffrage, with the vote granted to all literate persons who owned real estate valued at one hundred and fifty dollars. Because many blacks and whites could not have met this requirement, the proposal was conservative, not a likely suggestion from an advocate of democratic reform. There was an incongruity between Boyce's suffrage position and his desire that South Carolina become "a people's State."[37]

His wealth destroyed by war, the former Confederate moved to Washington in 1866 with his wife. There he practiced law and watched public affairs. In a public letter of July 1867 he advised the white South Carolinians to comply with the recently passed Reconstruction Acts and befriend the blacks. Thereby, he maintained, the whites could preserve racial harmony and keep political power "in safe hands." He also cautioned his readers against antagonizing the Republicans, who were now dominant.[38]

Most whites ignored this advice, while the newly franchised blacks spurned the overtures of a conservative white minority to form a coalition. The freedmen provided the voting base for Republican rule, which came to South Carolina in 1868. The turn of events saddened Boyce, who commented in 1872 that the new regime was plundering his native state shamelessly. Three years later he remarked that universal black suffrage had proven a failure, and he wondered if the North might "profit by the lesson."[39]

Successful in his law practice, he spent his last years in retirement in Fairfax County, Virginia. He died in 1890.[40]

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[1] William Edrington, *History of Fairfield County, South Carolina* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., n.d.), 35; United States Census manuscript returns, Fairfield District, South Carolina, 1860. His grandfather was John Boyce, an Irish Protestant who came to South Carolina in 1765. His father, Robert Boyce, married Lydia Waters, of the Waters family which migrated from England in the seventeenth century. In 1838 Boyce married Mary E. Pearson.

[2] Boyce to Benjamin F. Perry, March 17, 1851, Perry Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History; *Southern Patriot* (Greenville), July 11, 1851. California's admission as a free state did not disturb him. And while many Southerners would have accepted an extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific Ocean, Boyce disliked the proposal. Such an arrangement, he argued, would have divided California into two free states. Another controversial part of the Compromise, the banning of the slave trade in the District of Columbia, he considered inconsequential except for the expression of "a hostile spirit."

[3] Letter from Boyce to Hon. John R. Richardson, 1851, Boyce Pamphlets, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

[4] Harold V. Schultz, *Nationalism and Sectionalism in South Carolina, 1852-1860* (Durham, 1950), 52-53; *Sumter Banner*, March 8, 1853. In 1860 the population of his Congressional district was 130,082, of which 62 per cent were slaves. John B. Robbins, "Confederate Nationalism: Politics and Government in the Confederate South" (Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 1964), 264.

[5] *Congressional Globe*, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 723; *Sumter Watchman*, August 15, 1855. In the summer of 1857 Boyce noted that Kansas was "slipping from our grasp," and in the following summer he conceded that Kansas would eventually become a free state. With the Kansas issue settled, he hoped that there would no longer be any sectional quarrel. *Charleston Mercury*, July 1, 1857, August 23, 1858.

[6] *Congressional Globe*, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix 723-26. Richard Hofstadter interpreted John C. Calhoun as a "Marx of the Master Class" in *The American Political Tradition* (New York, 1948), 68-92.

[7] *Sumter Watchman*, November 14, 1855. Boyce scoffed at the contention that emancipation would benefit the blacks. He argued that emancipation had worsened the condition of the West Indian slaves. *Congressional Globe*, 35 Cong., 1 Sess., 1361.

[8] *Ibid.*, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., 100, 35 Cong., 1 Sess., 1361.

[9] *Ibid.*, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., 536; Boyce to James J. Pettigrew, May 14, 1858, Pettigrew Papers, North Carolina Department of Archives and History; *Sumter Watchman*, August 15, 1855, September 20, 1859. Also, Boyce observed, most immigrants settled in the North, thereby augmenting the free section's political strength.

[10] *Ibid.*, November 14, 1855; *Congressional Globe*, 33 Cong., 2 Sess., Appendix 91-94, 34 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix 337-39. He rejected the notion that possession of Cuba was necessary to safeguard American commerce, and he warned that ownership of Cuba might draw the United States into unnecessary foreign conflicts.

[11] *Ibid.*, 33 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 209-14, 34 Cong., 3 Sess., Appendix 215-18; *Sumter Watchman*, August 15, 1855, November 14, 1855, October 28, 1857, November 11, 1857. Urging regional harmony, he sharply assailed the Know-Nothing movement, which he viewed as divisive.

[12] Schultz, *Nationalism and Sectionalism in South Carolina*, 92-101, 147-49, 175-77. Hammond and Chesnut were elected to the United States Senate in the late 1850's.

[13] *Sumter Watchman*, November 14, 1855; Robert W. Johannsen, *Stephen A. Douglas* (New York, 1973), 435-36. During a Congressional debate in 1856 Boyce declared that he would not subject himself to the "dictation" of the Democratic party. *Congressional Globe*, 34 Cong., 1 Sess., 143-44.

[14] *Sumter Watchman*, November 14, 1855. As the 1860 election approached, Boyce suggested that the Democratic presidential nominee should be a Southerner, while his choice, if a Southerner were not named, was Oregon Senator Joseph Lane. He opposed Douglas' bid for Southern support, and he was annoyed by the Illinois Senator's position that a territory could ban slavery by unfriendly legislation. However, he also opposed the effort, made by some Southerners, to demand a federal slave code. *Ibid.*, July 12, September 20, 1859; *Edgefield Advertiser*, May 25, 1859; *Charleston Mercury*, October 14, 1859.

[15] *Sumter Watchman*, April 16, 1856.

[16] *Ibid.*, November 14, 1855. Many of the National Democrats wanted to democratize the state's political system, one of the most oligarchic in the country.

[17] *Ibid.*, November 14, 1855, September 20, 1859; *Congressional Globe*, 34 Cong., 1 Sess., 143-44, 35 Cong., 1 Sess., 1358-61. The issue of slavery in the territories open to settlement were "unsuitable for slavery."

[18] Boyce to Christopher G. Memminger, January 4, 1860, Memminger Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

[19] *Yorkville Enquirer*, August 16, November 15, 1860; *Congressional Globe*, 36 Cong., 1 Sess., 308-09; *Charleston Mercury*, November 7, 1860; Laura White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett: Father of Secession* (New York, 1931), 171-72n.

[20] On politics and public opinion in the state during the 1850's, see Schultz, *Nationalism and Sectionalism in South Carolina*, and Steven Channing, *Crisis of Fear: Secession in South Carolina* (New York, 1970).

[21] *Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865* (7 v., Washington, 1904-05), V, 517-18, VI, 107, 382, 764, 843, 846, VII, 54, 350, 379, 673; "Proceedings of the Confederate Congress," Southern Historical Society, *Papers*, XLIV, 102, XLVI, 110; Boyce to James H. Hammond, April 4, 1862, "Boyce-Hammond Correspondence," ed. Rosser Taylor, *Journal of Southern History*, III (1937), 352.

[22] Boyce to Hammond, March 17, April 4, 1862, *Ibid.*, 349-52; "Proceedings of..Congress," XLIV, 32, XLVI, 110.

[23] *Journal of the Congress..*, V, 385-86, VI, 80-81; Boyce to Hammond, April 15, 1863, "Boyce-Hammond Correspondence," 353. When the first formal peace proposal was submitted in Congress in September 1862, by Tennessee's Henry S. Foote and Georgia's Hines Holt, Boyce backed it.

[24] Mary B. Chesnut, *A Diary from Dixie*, ed. Ben Ames Williams (New York, 1949), 448; Thomas B. Alexander and Richard Beringer, *The Anatomy of the Confederate Congress* (Nashville, 1972), 294; Wilfred B. Yearns, *The Confederate Congress* (Athens, Ga., 1960), 178; *Journal of the Congress..*, VII, 150-51; Reminiscences of Jehu A. Orr, typescript (n.d., no pagination), Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

[25] Boyce to Hammond, October 5, 1864, "Boyce-Hammond Correspondence," 354; Boyce to Lawrence M. Keitt, November 4, 1864, Keitt Papers, Duke University Library; Boyce to Alexander Stephens, August 24, 1864, Stephens Papers, Emory University Library.

[26] Boyce to Stephens, August 24, 1864, *Ibid.*, Charleston *Daily Courier*, October 13, 1864.

[27] John R. Brumgardt, "Alexander H. Stephens and the Peace Issue in the Confederacy" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Riverside, 1974), 297-313.

[28] Yearns, *Confederate Congress*, 177; R. Nicholas Olsberg, "A Government of Class and Race; William Henry Trescot and the South Carolina Chivalry, 1860-

1865" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1972), 407-08; *The South Carolinian* (Columbia), October 19, 1864.

[29] *Charleston Mercury*, October 24, 1864; Charleston *Daily Courier*, November 16, 1864.

[30] *Ibid.*, November 28, 1864; Boyce to Hammond, October 5, 1864, "Boyce-Hammond Correspondence," 354.

[31] Charles E. Cauthen, *South Carolina Goes to War, 1860-1865* (Chapel Hill, 1950), 218-20; White, Rhett, 237-38.

[32] "Proceedings of..Congress," LI, 342-43, 409-10.

[33] Yearns, *Confederate Congress*, 181; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, July 4,1865.

[34] *Ibid.*, July 4, 1865; Lillian A. Kibler, *Benjamin F. Perry: South Carolina Unionist* (Durham, 1946), 377-78; Boyce to Johnson, July 12, 1865, Andrew Johnson Papers, Library of Congress. Perry, a Greenville editor and lawyer, had been a leading prewar unionist. He was a Confederate judge during the war.

[35] Boyce to Johnson, June 23, July 5, July 9, 1865, Boyce to F. P. Blair, Sr., October 7, 1865, *Ibid.; Yorkville Enquirer*, November 9, 1865.

[36] Boyce, "President Johnson's Policy of Reconstruction," *DeBow's Review*, I (January 1866), 22-24; Winnsboro *Tri-Weekly News*, December 9, 1865.

[37] *Ibid.*, July 4, December 9, 1865; Boyce, "President Johnson's Policy of Reconstruction," 25; Boyce to F. P. Blair, Sr., October 7, 1865, Johnson Papers, Library of Congress. Boyce proposed that his suffrage plan should take effect after a four year period.

[38] Edrington, *History of Fairfield County*, 36-37; Boyce to J. D. B. DeBow, June 13, October 1, 1866, January 17, January 20, 1867, DeBow Papers, Duke University Library; *Yorkville Enquirer*, July 25, 1867.

[39] Boyce to Clement C. Clay, January 10, 1872, Clay Papers, Duke University Library; Boyce to William Porcher Miles, September 22, 1875, Miles Papers, Southern Historical Collection.

[40] Edrington, *History of Fairfield County*, 36-37.

SOUTH CAROLINA LEADERSHIP IN THE SOUTHERN UNIFICATION MOVEMENT, 1849-1850

by

Thelma Jennings

On the evening of December 22, 1848, sixty-nine southern Congressman, representing every slave state except Delaware, convened in the Senate chamber. John C. Calhoun, convinced that the South was on the verge of "the crisis of its fate," was perhaps the prime mover of this caucus which formally launched the southern movement for unity during the sectional crisis that followed the Mexican War.[1] His colleague, Senator Andrew P. Butler, however, later denied this on the floor of the Senate. According to Butler, the Southern movement originated with Senators Henry S. Foote of Mississippi and R. M. T. Hunter of Virginia.[2]

As chairman of a committee of five who were instructed to prepare a statement of the southern position, Calhoun penned one of his ablest state papers, the "Address of the Southern Delegates in Congress to their Constituents"--a powerful plea for unity. Although this address did not directly call for a southern convention, it hinted at the idea as a necessary future resort to combat northern aggression toward southern rights. Of a total representation of 121 from the slaveholding states, forty-eight Congressmen, including the entire South Carolina delegation, signed the Southern Address which was issued a month later. Only two of those who signed were Whigs, as the followers of the newly elected Taylor administration gave the movement little support in Congress.[3] To them, it appeared as an attempt to disorganize the southern Whigs and perhaps compel General Taylor "to throw himself in the hands" of many southern Democrats. Robert Toombs, a prominent Georgia Whig representative, told Calhoun that the "union of the South was neither possible nor desirable" until southerners were ready to dissolve the Union. In his opinion the Whigs had "completely foiled" Calhoun in his attempt to form a southern party.[4]

In the cotton states of the deep South, where necessity for action was more keenly felt, the Southern Address met with more universal approval than in the upper South.[5] But even in the lower South there were voices of dissent, and Calhoun's followers throughout the South expressed grave doubts concerning southern unification. Senator Herschel V. Johnson, one of Calhoun's most ardent supporters in Georgia, expressed the fear "that the people of the South are not properly awake to the danger--not thoroughly nerved to united resistance."[6] According to Senator William R. King of Alabama, divisions among southerners themselves presented an obstacle to any satisfactory settlement of the slavery question by compromise. Moreover, they encouraged the antislavery advocates "to persevere in their mad career; and where it is to terminate God only knows."[7]

In spite of the fact that the Virginia legislature had been in the forefront of opposition to any congressional restriction on slavery in the new territories, Richard K. Cralle, Calhoun's former confidential clerk, expressed doubts as to whether his state would live up to these legislative resolutions that had become a model for the remonstrances of the other slave states. He believed South Carolina would have to seek support from states farther South.[8]

During February and March 1849, practically every South Carolina district and parish held public meetings, most of which provided for the appointment of Committees of Safety and Correspondence that communicated with one another and other states for the purpose of devising proper measures for common safety. The Richland Committee of Safety and Correspondence invited the other district committees to send delegates to a meeting at Columbia.[9] On May 14-15, this convention of 109 delegates approved the Southern Address, provided for a Central Committee of Vigilance and Safety consisting of five members, and recommended that a special session of the legislature be called in case Congress should pass any antislavery restrictions. But the delegates were reluctant to extend an invitation for a southern convention to consider joint action.[10] Because South Carolina was known for its radicalism, Calhoun and other state leaders thought it was desirable to promote the unification movement in such a manner that the call for a southern convention would originate elsewhere.[11]

Probably Mississippi was second to South Carolina in sentiment with regard to northern aggression and the fear of congressional interference.[12] On May 7, a week before the Columbia meeting, a sizable number of citizens of central Mississippi met at Jackson. They adopted resolutions which requested all Mississippians to choose county delegates, equally from both political parties, to attend a convention at Jackson on the first Monday in October to reach united sentiment on the slavery question. Colin S. Tarpley, an ardent Hinds County Democrat, sent the proceedings of the May meeting to Calhoun with the request for his opinion in regard to the proper course the October Convention should adopt.[13] Calhoun replied that the fixed determination of the North to push the abolition requestions to the extreme left only one alternative for saving both the South and the Union--"a Southern Convention, and that if much longer delayed, cannot." The convention should be held the following autumn if possible; certainly it must not be delayed beyond the next year. Moreover, he indicated that no state was in a better position to assume leadership than Mississippi, and that the proper time for a general call would probably coincide with the October convention.[14] Writing to Senator Foote, Calhoun also urged that the October meeting issue the call for a southern convention--to save the Union is possible but at all events to save the South. Foote replied that several leaders of both political parties in the state had promised to act upon Calhoun's recommendations at Jackson.[15]

During the following year, both Tarpley and Foote, however, claimed the October Convention, without any instigation from Calhoun, had acted upon its own judgment in issuing the call for a southern convention to meet at Nashville on the first Monday in June 1850. When Sam Houston, in a speech before the Senate on February 8, 1850, intimated South Carolina influenced Mississippi to issue the call, Senator Jefferson Davis joined his colleague in stoutly denying the charge. Davis proudly asserted that Mississippi looked to the leaders of no other state to direct her action.[16] By December 1851, Foote frankly admitted the Calhoun influence, but he never acknowledged that he was one of Calhoun's correspondents. He claimed that other correspondents' letters had satisfied him that the "*modus operandi* of the convention was more or less marked out by his (Calhoun's) great intellect."[17] Even if some leaders in Mississippi had independently considered initiation of the call for the southern convention, Calhoun's leadership was chiefly responsible. Yet the assertion of Mississippi leaders, that they acted in an independent manner, promoted the idea in the South in 1850 that a state other than South Carolina was entirely responsible for calling the convention.

Although it was desirable for South Carolina to be among the last to respond to Mississippi's call, Calhoun did not think that his state "should hold back and wait for a movement of the other states." He urged James H. Hammond, a prominent state leader, to exert his influence on the members of the state legislature to appoint delegates.[18] On the evening of December 7, 1849, the legislature met in caucus to initiate a response to the Mississippi call. Following a warm endorsement of the proposal, the caucus recommended a plan for an indirect election of two delegates from each of the seven congressional districts. Three days later the caucus chose as delegates at large to the Nashville Convention: Langdon Cheves, Franklin H. Elmore, Robert W. Barnwell, and James H. Hammond.[19]

The introduction of Clay's Compromise resolutions and Webster's Seventh of March speech tended to offset the southern movement. If a settlement could be secured in Congress many southerners saw no necessity for a Southern Convention. Although some southern leaders felt that Webster's speech resulted in injury, the southern press in general applauded it. Calhoun also made his last plea to the Senate as the southern movement reached a peak about the first of March.[20]

Some historians have expressed the opinion that only in Mississippi and South Carolina did public feeling seem to continue in favor of the convention. Even in Mississippi, as sentiment in favor of the compromise developed, the Whigs gave less support to the convention.[21] Sentiment in South Carolina, however, did not change, and the proposed compromise was almost unanimously condemned in the state. The Charleston *Mercury* declared that it was a growing conviction that Clay's proposals were a "snare", while the editor of the *Spartan* (Spartanburg) expressed his lack of faith in the committee especially when Clay became chairman. When the Charleston *Courier* and a few Whigs in Charleston came out in favor of the Compromise, the *Spartan* severely assailed them.[22]

What was the position of the old state Unionists of nullification days--those individuals who had always been in the minority of South Carolina leadership? Benjamin F. Perry, prominent Whig newspaper editor at Greenville, believed that the Compromise should be adopted. "But the whole state of South Carolina is opposed to it and a large portion of the state for disunion *per se*!!" he declared.[23] Joel R. Poinsett, Union party leader on both state and national level, favored the Compromise and abhorred disunion as an alternative. Some of the Charleston leaders desired his conservative influence at the Nashville Convention to offset the hotspurs, but they decided that the public avowal of Poinsett's sentiments would render his election an impracticality. Poinsett came to the same conclusion, as he had long been aware that both the district and the state were prepared for the extremity. As he conscientiously believed disunion would lead to immediate civil war that would probably end in defeat for the South, he considered it wrong to yield to public opinion and by any act on his part to aid in the perpetration of destruction. But if revolution came--for there could be no peaceable secession--he was ready to take his stand for the South. Richard Yeadon, a former editor of the Charleston *Courier*, deplored dissolution of the Union, but he believed the passage of the Wilmot

Proviso or its equivalent would be a justifying cause. "I am no disunionist," declared Yeadon, but he was convinced that the South should make a resolute stand and present an impassable limit to northern aggression with disunion as a possible alternative. Old nullifiers and old Unionists were now with a few exceptions in agreement.[24]

The "Voice of the South" for the past two decades or more was silenced forever two months before the first Monday in June arrived. According to the New York *Herald*, no hope existed now for the Nashville Convention. With Calhoun gone, the moral courage and unity of the South were gone.[25] Writing to Hammond shortly thereafter, Virginia fire-eater, Beverley Tucker, remarked that Calhoun "died nobly and his last act redeemed all the errors of his life." He had heard of some who rejoiced in Calhoun's death as "providential," for they considered him "the moving cause in South Carolina." But Tucker continued, "You and I know that he restrained it, and restrained himself."[26] Actually, Calhoun had been unable to unify the South, and his position in his last speech was very nearly the same as those who believed that the time had come to dissolve the Union. It is impossible, however, to determine to what extent his loss affected the course of the Nashville Convention.

Some of the most prominent leaders in South Carolina were among the delegates chosen to the Nashville Convention.[27] A closer look at the delegation in comparison with the other states' representatives, indicates that the group from the Palmetto State was perhaps the most talented, Mississippi alone excepted. One observer at the convention commented that South Carolina had "sent her jewels" there.[28] At least eight of the seventeen delegates who attended were college graduates, while thirteen had been admitted to the bar and were practicing attorneys. A number of the delegates had distinguished public service careers. Thirteen were at some time in the state legislature and five (Robert Barnwell, James Hammond, Francis Pickens, Langdon Cheves, and Robert Barnwell Rhett) had served in the United States House of Representatives prior to their selection as delegates. Cheves had been Speaker of the House during the Thirtieth Congress. Barnwell, Hammond, and Rhett were later elected to the United States Senate. Before his selection, Hammond had served as governor of the state. R. F. W. Allston and Pickens later became the state's chief executive, with the latter serving during the secession crisis.[29]

Although it is probably safe to conclude that none of the South Carolina delegates would have hesitated as disunion in 1850, their views varied somewhat from extreme ultraism to qualified moderation. Rhett had even expressed sorrow to Calhoun that there was no chance for the Wilmot Proviso or the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia to be enacted by Congress. He wished to God northerners would do both and precipitate the contest in order that it might be ended "once and forever"--a contest that would accomplish "our emancipation instead of that of our slaves." Though Rhett had taken little part in the activities leading to the convention, he had begun "to assume the air of a prophet justified" by the time it met.[30] David F. Jamison, who would later serve as president of the South Carolina secession convention, argued that slavery was the indispensable basis for a successful Republic, and that the abolitionary campaign and the excesses of northern democracy made separation as necessary as it was desirable.[31]

On the other hand Pickens was following a somewhat more moderate line of Southern cooperation--a viewpoint that was not as ultra as some of his associates. He advocated the preservation of the Union provided that southern rights and honor did not perish in the attempt. No one should look to disunion or desire it *per se* for it should be avoided if possible.[32]

The theme of southern nationalism extends throughout Hammond's extensive correspondence for this period.[33] Pickens expressed the belief to Benjamin Perry that both Hammond and Cheves were bitter against the Union. And Hammond himself declared that if the convention did not open the way to dissolution he preferred that it never meet. To Calhoun he expressed the opinion that he was very much opposed to any address to the North and another address to the South was unnecessary. "A very short preamble and a couple of resolutions"--which he confided he had already drawn up--would be sufficient. The substance of these resolutions, as stated in his diary, formulated a plan for a General Congress of Southern delegates empowered by dissolve the Union and organize a new government. Whether he proposed them at Nashville would depend on circumstances, as he had not intention of making a fool of himself or acting prematurely. On the eve of his departure for the convention, Hammond confided to his diary, "I am loth (sic) to go believing nothing will be done to repay the trouble. But as something important may be done it is my duty to go."[34]

The Southern Convention assembled at Nashville on Monday, June 3, 1850, with 175 delegates representing nine states. From the beginning, the general policy of the seventeen member South Carolina delegation was to remain quiet, giving the lead to others, and thus dissipating the prejudice against "South Carolina dictation." Hammond confided to his diary that Pickens and Rhett were for speaking and being active, while he, Cheves, and Barnwell were opposed with most of the delegation supporting the latter.[35] The morning session of the second day revealed that Pickens was not content to remain silent. A long and spirited debate occurred in which Pickens participated. Speaking in "a very antimated manner," he emphasized sovereign state equality and concluded with "equality now and forever or independence."[36]

The last two days of the convention were marked by vigorous debate and several important speeches, that centered around Rhett's address to the people of the slaveholding states exclusive of Delaware. In a stirring and eloquent speech, Pickens replied to an Alabama delegate who opposed the radicalism of the address. Though attempting to repeal the idea that the convention's object was to dissolve the Union, Pickens indicated that the people of the southern states were looking to the assemblage to attend to their rights. With all acting together the Union could never be dissolved; a middle or halfway ground might result in disunion.[37] During the afternoon session of the last day, Hammond replied to President William Sharkey of Mississippi in defense of the address. In conclusion he declared the South "had nothing to do but to march forward in one unbroken column to equality in the Union, or independence out of it."[38]

Finally, the address, amended as proposed by Gideon J. Pillow of Tennessee, was unanimously adopted, as well as twenty-eight resolutions. The proposal to extend the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific was the most significant resolution. The final one provided for a reassembling of the convention at Nashville on the sixth Monday after the adjournment of Congress. Although Rhett's address as adopted was still more radical than the resolutions, the moderates had won at Nashville by adopting a wait-and-see attitude.[39]

What was the reaction of the South Carolina delegates to the convention that their "old statesman" had fathered? Hammond was hopeful for the future as

South Carolina had succeeded in her policy and laid the foundations for wielding great influence among the other states.[40] Pickens declared that his state asked no favors and made no threats; she was content to follow the leadership of others.[41] To a Charleston audience on June 22, George A. Trenholm expressed his conviction that great things had been achieved in bringing the South together in common council. After Trenholm's speech, Rhett foretold "the beginning of a Revolution" as Congress would reject the demand of the Nashville Convention and the North would continue its agitation. Discarding whatever restraint had bound him at the convention, Rhett now openly and without reservation declared himself a disunionist. A few days later, Hammond expressed the fear that Rhett's speech would destroy the good effect of South Carolina's policy at Nashville.[42]

By the last days of September the Compromise of 1850 had become five laws of the land. The passage of the Compromise measures tended only to increase disunion sentiment in South Carolina and to bring it more into the open. But Governor Whitemarsh Seabrook indicated that he would wait for the movement of Georgia and that of one or two other southern states before committing South Carolina. To call a special session of the Nashville Convention would embarrass the proceedings of that body.[43]

Beyond a doubt South Carolina was more interested in the reassembling of the Nashville Convention than any other state. Yet even in the Palmetto State, there was a difference of opinion; lines were being drawn between the cooperationists, who opposed secession unless the South was united, and the immediate secessionists, who favored single state action. Some looked to the convention as the first step leading to a Southern Congress with full authority from the states, while others had little faith in a second session.[44] Before the passage of the Compromise, Barnwell had written Hammond, "As for Nashville we must go there if South Carolina goes alone she must go, her whole delegation." He urged Hammond to prepare an address for the next session and send it to someone in Mississippi to be presented, for South Carolina must not appear in the matter. By September 30, Hammond had decided, however, that a second session of the convention would be at least a farce and declared he would not attend.[45]

Only fifty-nine delegates representing seven southern states traveled to Nashville for the second session of the convention. Over one-third of them had not been present in June, and these new members were generally more radical in their views. The Palmetto state had the largest and most representative group with sixteen members. Unlike the June meeting, the "ultras" gained control.[46] John L. Marling, editor of the Nashville *Gazette*, was convinced that the delegates from all the states except Tennessee cherished feelings of deadly hostility to the Union. But South Carolina with her "supple and cunning statesmen" was the moving power.[47]

Perhaps it was altogether fitting that Langdon Cheves, dean of the South Carolina delegation, made the one outstanding address at the second session. He had prepared a two or three hour speech, which he read, to sustain his resolution that secession was the only remedy for the wrongs of the South. Beginning with the admission of California--"fraudulent, insulting, tyrannical"--he catalogued the wrongs the South had endured at northern hands. "There is no doubt they have abolished the Constitution," he declared. "The carcass may remain, but the spirit has left. . . . It stinks in our nostrils." The only remedy lay in united secession of the slaveholding states. "Nothing else will be wise--nothing else will be practicable. The Rubicon is passed--

the Union is already dissolved." If four or five adjoining states would unite he did not think the enemy would venture to attack; any war made on the South was unauthorized by the Constitution. He concluded with a stroke of eloquence: "O! great God, unite us, and a tale of submission shall never be told."[48]

Cheves' prayer remained unanswered in 1850, as the movement for southern unity collapsed. The crisis had passed; the South acquiesced on conditions, and the Union was saved. Even in South Carolina the Unionists, with the support of the cooperationists, triumphed the following year over the question of the acceptance of the Compromise.[49] Delighted with the turn of events, James L. Petigru, low country Unionist, wrote Webster they had "taken the state from Rhett and broken as I think the spell Calhoun left."[50] No state would follow South Carolina and she was unwilling to follow Rhett's leadership in seceding alone.

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[1] The best secondary account of the launching of the Southern movement is in Charles M. Wiltse, *John C. Calhoun* (3 vols, Indianapolis, 1944-51), III, 378-88. See also Milo M. Quaife (ed.), *The Diary of James K. Polk During His Presidency, 1845-1849* (4 vols., Chicago, 1910), IV, 249-52, 284-88.

[2] *Cong. Globe*, 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 101.

[3] Richard K. Cralle (ed.), *The Works of John C. Calhoun* (6 vols., New York, 1888), IV, 285-313, includes a few letters related to the address and a list of the signers, as well as the address itself. Allan Nevins, *Ordeal of the Union* (2 vols., New York, 1947), I, 223-25.

[4] Robert Toombs to John J. Crittenden, January 3, 1849, in Ulrich B. Phillips (ed.), *The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb*, American Historical Association, *Annual Report*, 1911, II (Washington, 1913), 139; Toombs to Crittenden, January 22, 1849, in John J. Crittenden Papers, Library of Congress.

[5] Avery Craven, *The Growth of Southern Nationalism, 1848-1861* (Baton Rouge, 1953), 59.

[6] Johnson to Calhoun, July 20, 1849, in Herschel V. Johnson Papers, Duke University Library.

[7] King to John W. Womack, March 10, 1849, in William R. King Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina.

[8] Cralle to Calhoun, July 25, 1849, in J. Franklin Jameson (ed.), *Correspondence of John C. Calhoun*, American Historical Association, *Annual Report*, 1899, II (Washington, 1900), 1199-1202.

[9] Chauncey S. Boucher, "The Secession and Cooperation Movements in South Carolina, 1848-52," Washington University *Studies*, V, Humanistic Series, Part II, No. 2 (St. Louis, 1918), 78-79; Phillip M. Hamer, *The Secession Movement in South Carolina*, 1847-1852 (Allentown, Penn., 1918), 31-33. See Charleston *Mercury*, February-March, 1849, for accounts of various meetings.

[10] For the proceedings of the convention see Charleston *Mercury*, May 15, 16, 1849.

[11] Calhoun to John H. Means, April 13, 1849, in Jameson, *Calhoun Correspondence*, 764-66; Franklin H. Elmore to Whitemarsh B. Seabrook, May 30, 1849, in Seabrook Papers, Library of Congress.

[12] Cleo Hearon, "Mississippi and the Compromise of 1850," Mississippi Historical Society *Publications*, XIV (1913), 39.

[13] Vicksburg *Whig*, May 10, 1849; Tarpley to Calhoun, May 9, 1849, in Calhoun Papers, South Caroliniana Library, The official account of the May Convention is given in the *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi* (Jackson, 1850), 269-76.

[14] Calhoun to Tarpley, July 9, 1849, entire letter quoted in Dallas T. Herndon, "The Nashville Convention of 1850," Alabama Historical Society *Transactions*, V. (1905), 207-208.

[15] Calhoun to Foote, August 2, 1849, in Charleston *Mercury*, June 4, 1851; Foote to Calhoun, September 25, 1849, in Jameson, *Calhoun Correspondence*, 1204-1205.

[16] Tarpley to the Editors of the *Mississippian*, May 16, 1850, reprinted in the *Black River Watchman* (Sumterville, S.C.), July 13, 1850; *Cong. Globe*, 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 97-102.

[17] *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 52; and 32 Cong., 1 Sess., 134-35.

[18] Calhoun to Hammond, December 7, 1849, in Jameson, *Calhoun Correspondence*, 775-76.

[19] *The Spartan* (Spartanburg), December 20, 1849, March 14, 1850; Hammond's Diary, December 17, 1849, in Hammond Papers, Library of Congress. There was no open opposition to the proposed convention within the state, but the purpose of the convention and the action it should take were viewed in various ways. Charleston *Mercury*, November 14, 15, 1849; Charleston Courier, October 31, 1849, November 7, 15, 1849; *The Spartan*, November 22, 1849.

[20] Herbert D. Foster, "Webster's Seventh of March Speech and the Secession Movement, 1850," *American Historical Review*, XXVII (1921-22), 245-70; Holman Hamilton, *Prologue to Conflict, the Crisis and Compromise of 1850* (Lexington, 1964), 82, 71-74; William O. Goode to R. M. T. Hunter, April 20, 1850, in Charles H. Ambler (ed.), *The Correspondence of R. M. T. Hunter, 1826-1876*, American Historical Association *Annual Report*, 1916, II (Washington, 1918), 110-12; New Orleans *Bee*, March 16, 1850; Baltimore *Sun*, March 8, 1850; Jackson *Southron*, March 22, 1850; Charleston *Mercury*, March 14, 1850. See the *Cong. Globe*, 31 Cong., 1 Sess., Appendix, 269-76 for Webster's speech and 31 Cong., 1 Sess., 451-55 for Calhoun's speech.

[21] Hearon, "Mississippi and the Compromise of 1850," 118; Jackson *Southron*, April 19, May 3, 1850; Avery Craven, *The Coming of the Civil War* (Chicago, 1963), 263.

[22] Joel Ward to Lewis Ward, May 5, 1850, in Lewis Ward Papers, Duke University Library; Boucher, "Secession and Cooperation Movements in South Carolina," 86-87; Charleston *Mercury*, May 31, 1850; *The Spartan*, May 16, 23, 1850.

[23] Benjamin F. Perry, MS Journal, June 6, 10, 1850, Southern Historical Collection.

[24] Yeadon to Poinsett, March 1, 1850; Poinsett to Yeadon, March 6; Yeadon to Poinsett, March 9, and Poinsett to Yeadon, March 18, all in Joel R. Poinsett Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

[25] New York *Herald*, April 10, 12, 1850.

[26] Tucker to Hammond, May 7, 1850, Typescript in Beverley Tucker Papers, Duke University Library.

[27] For a list of the delegates see Charleston *Mercury*, May 11, 1850. In addition to the delegates at large, other prominent leaders included R. F. W. Allston, James Chesnut, Jr., Maxcy Gregg, David F. Jamison, Francis W. Pickens, Robert Barnwell Rhett and George A. Trenholm. Less significant delegates were John A. Bradley, William Du Bose, William J. Hanna, Drayton Nance, Samuel Otterson, Joseph N. Whitner, and Henry C. Young. Franklin H. Elmore resigned as a delegate at large, after receiving the appointment to fill Calhoun's vacancy in the Senate. To replace Elmore, Governor Whitemarsh B. Seabrook appointed J. W. Hayne of Charleston, but Hayne failed to attend. This was the only vacancy in the South Carolina delegation, the best record by far of any state represented. See Hayne to Hammond, May 3, 1850, in Hammond Papers, Library of Congress.

[28] J. H. Ingraham (ed.), *The Sunny South or the Southerner at Home Embracing Five Years Experience of a Northern Governess in the Land of the Sugar and the Cotton* (Philadelphia, 1860), 132-33. The governess who attend the convention wrote under the assumed name, "Kate Conyngham."

[29] A majority of the delegates combined their public service careers with plantation duties. The slaveholdings of eleven of these men were large enough to classify them as major planters, and two others were small planters. Two financiers, a railroad director, and at least two educators were included in the delegation. Thelma Jennings, A Reappraisal of the Nashville Convention (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Tennessee, 1968) presents a personnel analysis of the delegates, 187-97, 479-80.

[30] Rhett to Calhoun, July 19, 1849, in Chauncey S. Boucher and Robert P. Brooks (eds.), "Correspondence Addressed to John C. Calhoun, 1837-1849," American Historical Association *Annual Report*, 1929, (Washington, 1930), 517-18; Laura A. White, *Robert Barnwell Rhett: Father of Secession* (New York, 1931), 105-106.

[31] Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, *Dictionary of American Biography* (22 vols. and index, New York, 1928-58), IX, 604-605.

[32] Benjamin F. Perry, MS Journal, May 19 and July 9, 1850, Southern Historical Collection; J. Edmunds, Jr., Francis W. Pickens: A Political Biography (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1967), 151-53. Pickens did not believe the delegates should be instructed as they would be more effective if they were allowed to be flexible.

[33] The largest collection of Hammond Papers is located at the Library of Congress. They concentrate primarily upon Hammond's political life and interests.

[34] Benjamin F. Perry, MS Journal, May 19, and July 9, 1850; Hammond to Ruffin, February 8, 1850, in Edmund Ruffin Papers, Southern Historical Collection; Hammond to Calhoun, March 5, 1850, in Jameson, *Calhoun Correspondence*, 1210-12; Hammond to William B. Hodgson, April 2, 1850, in Hammond Papers, Duke University; Hammond's Diary, March 17, and May 26, 1850, in Hammond Papers, University of South Carolina.

[35] Hammond's Diary, August 10, 1850.

[36] Nashville *Daily Gazette* and Nashville *True Whig*, June 4, 1850.

[37] *Resolutions, Address, and Journal of Proceedings of the Southern Convention Held at Nashville, Tennessee, June 3rd to 12th, Inclusive in the Year 1850* (Nashville, 1850), 60-64. Official journal of the first session published by order of the convention, pp. 65-66 missing, and located at Harvard University Library. Some observers regarded Pickens' two speeches as being "among the most powerful and effective" delivered, but Hammond declared they were "*stuff* and sickened the delegation save Du Bose." See Ingraham, ed. *The Sunny South*, 133; Anonymous, "The Southern Convention," *Southern Quarterly Review*, XIX (September, 1850), 227. If William Gilmore Simms, the editor, wrote this article, he was reporting what he had heard as he did not attend the convention. Hammond to Simms, June 16, 1850, in Hammond Papers, Library of Congress.

[38] Hammond later wrote that it was "unpremeditated," and that he did not intend to answer Sharkey until a few minutes before he ended his speech. The South Carolina delegation urged him to reply, and it was universally agreed he "demolished" Sharkey. Hammond's Diary, August 10, 1850.

[39] Nashville *True Whig*, June 15, 1850; Nashville *Union*, June 13, 14, 1850.

[40] Hammond to Simms, June 16, 1850, in Hammond Papers, Library of Congress. See also Hammond's Diary, August 10, 1850, Hammond Papers, Library of Congress.

[41] Pickens also attempted to clarify a misconception about the authority of the convention by explaining that it was a consultative body designed to suggest measures that produce harmony--a "first step" in the right direction. Charleston *Mercury*, September 7, 1850.

[42] *The Southron* (Jackson), July 5, 1850; White, *Rhett*, 108-109; Hammond to Simms, June 27, 1850, in Hammond Papers, Library of Congress.

[43] Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina* 65-67; Seabrook to John A. Leland, September 18 and 21, 1850, in Seabrook Papers, Library of Congress. Georgia was the center of attention, since the legislature had earlier in the year instructed the governor to call a convention if California were admitted to the Union. Barnwell asked Hammond to "operate upon Georgia," but Hammond did not think any South Carolinian should attempt to influence directly the proceedings in Georgia. Rhett opened the mass meeting in Macon on August 22, with the assurance South Carolina would follow wherever Georgia might lead. See Barnwell to Hammond, July 25 and September 8, 1850; Hammond to Samuel J. Ray, August 12 and 27, 1850, and to Simpson Fouche and others, September 26, 1850, all in Hammond Papers, Library of Congress. For Rhett's speech see *Southern Museum* (Macon), August 24, 1850.

[44] Charleston *Mercury*, September 16, 1850.

[45] Hammond revealed he had made his decision when it was agreed to meet in Nashville again rather than Marietta, Georgia, and events had strengthened his conviction. Barnwell to Hammond, September 9 and 26, 1850; Hammond to William Gilmore Simms, September 30, and to Seabrook, October 18, 1850; Hammond's Diary, November 29, 1850, all in Hammond Papers, Library of Congress.

[46] No official journey for the second session could be located. The Nashville *Daily American* has the fullest account and the *Republican Banner* is fairly good. The preamble and resolutions adopted November 18, 1850 are included in *Resolutions and Address of the Southern Convention* (Nashville, 1850), 24-27. Only Hammond, Allston and John Bradley were missing in the South Carolina delegation. Evidently, Dr. James Bradley took Allston's place at the convention. See Allston to James Bradley, November 1, 1850, in Bradley Family Papers, South Carolinana Library. The other new delegate was John S. Wilson. See *Republican Banner*, November 19, 1850 for the complete list of delegates.

[47] Nashville *Gazette*, November 19, 1850.

[48] *Speech of Langdon Cheves to the Southern Convention at Nashville, Tennessee*, November 14, 1850, published by the Southern Rights Association, 1850 (30 pp.) Library of Congress. This speech was published by both the *American* and *Republican Banner* on November 16. Before traveling to Nashville Cheves had written his daughter that he planned for his attendance to be the last public act of his life. Cheves to Mrs. Charles T. Haskell, October 7, 1850 in the Langdon Cheves Papers, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleton.

[49] Craven, *Growth of Southern Nationalism*, 103-15.

[50] Quoted to Hamer, *Secession Movement in South Carolina*, 125.

"'SOUL OF THE SOUTH': JAMES F. BYRNES AND THE RACIAL ISSUE IN AMERICAN POLITICS, 1911-1941"

by

Winfred B. Moore, Jr.

Since the first settlement at Jamestown, one of the most important issues confronting southern politicians has been the haunting problem of race relations. One of the southern politicians who had to deal with this issue was James F. Byrnes of South Carolina (1882-1972), who became one of the most influential men in American government during the first half of the twentieth century. This paper will examine the manner in which Byrnes addressed racial issues as a U.S. Congressman from 1911 to 1925 and as a U.S. Senator from 1931 to 1941. It is hoped that this examination will help to illuminate the forces which shaped Byrnes's racial thought and the impact he exerted on American race relations in the years which spanned from the Progressive Era through the New Deal.[1]

In 1910, James F. Byrnes of Aiken was elected to Congress from South Carolina's second congressional district, representing a seven county area along the Savannah River which was once described as "the damndest ... nigger-shootingest, sinfullest place in South Carolina." By that year, the politically observant Byrnes had been exposed to the virulent white racism of this home district of Benjamin R. Tillman and to the relatively less virulent, "Bourbon" variety of racism associated with Charleston, his home before moving to Aiken in 1900. Whichever view he found more appealing, Byrnes probably understood from his early political observations that nearly every white Carolinian was firmly committed to white supremacy and that any successful politician in his state had to have an acceptable position on the explosive racial issue.[2]

At least by the time he arrived on Capitol Hill in 1911, Byrnes had such a position. The foundation of this position was Byrnes's belief that blacks were inherently inferior to whites, that white supremacy must be maintained, and that recognition of these two principles formed the only acceptable status quo in southern race relations. From that foundation, he endorsed disfranchisement and segregation as the best means not only to safeguard this status quo but also to promote the maximum welfare of both races. For whites, Byrnes reasoned that this solution freed them to divide politically and pursue reform without fear of political or social interference from blacks. As long as blacks did not challenge this solution, Byrnes felt that it also worked to their best interests by reducing interracial tension and establishing a "racial peace" which allowed them to progress as much as possible with the aid of benevolent whites. For Byrnes, therefore, white paternalism and black subordination within a clearly defined, unchallenged framework of white supremacy constituted the ideal state of race relations. Accordingly, Byrnes dedicated himself to defending this ideal state from what he felt were the disruptive attacks of "unscrupulous" southern race-baiters on his right as well as "misguided" national reformers on his left. Whether or not Byrnes would have expressed his racial policy in these terms, it appears to have been such a policy that guided his political conduct from 1911 to 1941.[3]

The outlines of this policy began to emerge during the Carolinian's first eight years in the House. It was during those years that Byrnes acquired a justified reputation as a southern "Progressive" by supporting most of the reform legislation advocated by President Woodrow Wilson. Given his strong support of Wilson, it seems to be significant that racial issues were often involved on those few occasions when Byrnes opposed the President. One of the reasons Byrnes supported a more restrictive immigration law than the President advocated in 1914 was the Carolinian's fear that undesireable ethnic groups from southern and eastern Europe might "mingle" with Negroes "and so aggravate our race problem as to make it hopeless." Among Byrnes's objections to the Child Labor Act of 1916 was his belief that it established a precedent for federal regulation of labor practices which eventually could be used to attack racial segregation and discrimination in southern industries. Similarly, one factor in the Congressman's initial opposition to the Military Conscription Act of 1917 was his assessment that it did not specifically exclude the War Department from assigning "a boy from South Carolina...to serve...by the side of a Negro from Indiana." If that happened, Byrnes stated, America "would not have to go to Europe for war." Although these were the only major occasions on which Byrnes mentioned race during his early House career, they documented his sensitivity to protecting white supremacy from potential national threats even amidst the pro-southern racial policies of Woodrow Wilson.[4]

Beginning in 1919, Republican control of Congress, increased racial violence, and the emergence of the more assertive "New Negro" convinced Byrnes that much greater national threats to southern racial policies had developed. The first public expression of these heightened racial concerns came in a speech to the House on August 25, 1919, when Byrnes delivered the most inflammatory racial remarks of his legislative career. Commenting on the widespread racial violence of that summer, Byrnes placed the blame for these disturbances on the "incendiary" publications of Negro "radicals" such as W. E. B. DuBois. Byrnes stated that these radicals had "deliberately planned a campaign of violence" to spread the "seditious" doctrines of bolshevism, socialism, and racial equality. To stop radical activities, Byrnes suggested that certain black publications be banned from U.S. post offices and that revolutionaries be deported. To refute radical ideas, the Carolinian cited references which ranged from "God Almighty" to Abraham Lincoln to himself in an attempt to prove that southern blacks were inferior to whites, neither wanted nor needed racial equality, and were "prospering as never before in the history" of their race because of white guidance.[5]

In the ominous climax of that speech, Byrnes hinted that an armageddon might be approaching for those blacks who ignored his advice:

> If the two races are to live together in this country it may as well be understood that the war has in no way changed the attitude of the white man toward the social and political

> equality of the negro.... If by reason of his experience he seeks social and political equality with the white man but refuses to consider leaving for parts where it will willingly be given to him, and cherishes the hope that by violence it can be gained here, he can not too quickly realize that there are in this country 90,000,000 white people determined not to extend...equality to 10,000,000 negroes and a resort to violence must inevitably bring to the negro the greater suffering.

While expressing his hope that conservative blacks would help paternalistic whites avoid such a confrontation, Byrnes concluded unequivocally that America was "a white man's country and will always remain a white man's country."[6]

If Byrnes was opposed to violence, he made it clear in a letter to W. W. Ball in January, 1920, that he was also opposed to more peaceful avenues of racial reform such as allowing black Americans to exercise their right to vote. Byrnes warned Ball that the federal government might try to supervise the registration of women voters under the pending women's suffrage amendment. What concerned the Congressman about such a development was the prospect that recently established N.A.A.C.P. Chapters in South Carolina might try to persuade the government to supervise registration of black voters at the same time. At the end of this letter, Byrnes reminded Ball why Carolinians had to be vigilant on this as well as other issues:

> ...it is certain that it there was a fair registration they (blacks) would have a slight majority in our state. We cannot idly brush the facts aside. Unfortunate though it may be, our consideration of every question must include the consideration of this race question.[7]

This "consideration" was very evident the following year when Byrnes spoke against the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill, a measure which proposed to combat lynching by making it a federal crime. Byrnes's central argument against this bill was that it represented an unnecessary, impractical, and unconstitutional usurpation of state jurisdiction over the crime of murder. Byrnes contended that such unwarranted federal interference might disrupt, and could not improve, the "harmonious state of race relations" existing in his region. While expressing his disgust with mob violence, Byrnes asserted that Negro rape of white women was the premier cause of lynching. Accordingly he felt that the curtailment of this crime, not an anti-lynching law, was the best way to prevent mob violence. Presumably, Byrnes had such preventive cures in mind in 1922 when he castigated President Warren Harding for appointing a Negro registrar of the treasury "where more than 100 white women are employed."[8]

Having objected to violence, voting, and anti-lynching laws as methods of liberalizing the racial status quo, Byrnes turned his attention to education in 1924 and 1925. The subject of Byrnes's remarks was a proposed federal appropriation for Howard University, a major center of black student activism during the 1920's. In these remarks, Byrnes told the House that federal funding of any private university was inappropriate. Howard was especially unworthy, he continued, because some of its representatives advocated "socialism," "racial equality," and other ideas designed to "poison the minds of their students, ...make them discontented with their lot in life, and disturb the harmonious relations now existing." If his colleagues merely wanted to give money to a black college, Byrnes reasoned that Hampton, Tuskeegee, or other colleges with a self-help, non-protest, orientation would be a better selection than Howard. Should his colleagues persist in granting funds to Howard, Byrnes argued that they should at least "exercise some control" over that institution. Combined with his other activities in the House, these Congressional valedictory remarks on race made it clear that white supremacy had few defenders more committed than James F. Byrnes.[9]

If some observers of his House career were inclined to dismiss Byrnes as merely a typical southern race-baiter, however, they may have been surprised by his various primary election campaigns, especially those for the U.S. Senate. Race was not a major factor in his congressional election campaigns. Neither was race a dominant factor in Byrnes's first campaign for the Senate in 1924 when his most formidable opponent was the archetypal South Carolina demagogue, Coleman L. Blease. Perhaps because Byrnes, Nathaniel B. Dial, and John McMahan engaged in a fratricidal struggle for the "anti-Blease" vote, Blease remained uncharacteristically subdued throughout the summer. Byrnes campaigned on the "issues," his congressional record, and said little about race. Although he mentioned his stand on the Howard University appropriations, Byrnes also advocated bonus payments to black war veterans because "we must treat them justly and right." In congruence with this relatively moderate stand on race in Carolina politics, Byrnes refused a Grand Kleagle's offer to become a secret member of the Ku Klux Klan. The resentment which this refusal generated among the South Carolina Klan may have been one factor in Byrnes's razor-thin loss to Blease in the runoff primary.[10]

The racial issue was more prominent in the Senate campaign of 1930 when Blease was challenged by Byrnes and Leon Harris. With his campaign apparently stagnating, Blease raised the racial issue in a meeting at Union on July 7, when he seized upon a recent lynching in that city as an opportunity to deliver one of his rousing "To Hell with the Constitution" speeches, sanctioning mob violence against suspected Negro rapists. Shortly thereafter, a campaign flyer was circulated throughout the state warning that "Negroes Pray for Blease's Defeat, How will S.C. Democrats Answer?" with the obvious implication that Byrnes and Harris were not orthodox on the racial issue. Blease's supporters made other appeals to racial passions throughout the campaign.[11]

In vivid contrast to Blease, Byrnes refused to engage in racial epithets. Rather, he campaigned on his congressional record, discussed problems created by the Great Depression, and outlined how he would attack these problems as a senator. After suffering through Blease's theatrics, Byrnes told audiences that "no one believes in racial equality," that white supremacy was not endangered in South Carolina, and that one could not teach Negroes respect for the law by "hanging them to a telephone pole." Accordingly, Byrnes argued that it was foolish for Carolinians to support individuals who dwelled on a non-existent race problem when more vital problems awaited their attention. During the depression years, such pleas apparently struck a responsive chord. South Carolina gave Byrnes a 4500 vote mandate over Blease in the runoff primary. Byrnes justified this mandate in the Senate by becoming nationally recognized as a staunch supporter of New Deal measures, a personal "favorite" of Franklin Roosevelt, and perhaps the President's most valuable legislative whip on Capitol Hill.[12]

Despite this constructive record, Byrnes challenged by Thomas P. Stoney and William C. Harllee in the Senate primary of 1936. Both of these men attacked the Senator's association with what they felt were the New Deal's dangerously liberal policies in general and racial policies in particular. Their focus on race became most pronounced when Byrnes failed to join E. D. Smith and other Carolina delegates who "walked out" of that year's Democratic Convention in protest against black participation at the convention. While complete details of the walkout were filtering back to South Carolina, Stoney heatedly warned campaign audiences that blacks were controlling the Democratic Party and that the New Deal was promoting racial equality. If there had been any doubt that Byrnes was a willing accessory to these crimes, Stoney argued that the Senator's cowardly failure to join Smith at Philadelphia had removed it. Although such attacks continued throughout the summer, they reached a repulsive climax on July 7 when photographs of the black delegates were distributed to the audience and a postcard was circulated throughout the state claiming that:

> A vote for Roosevelt and Byrnes means the day is coming closer when dirty, evil smelling negroes will be going to church with you, your sister, your wife, or your mother. Busses, trains, hotels, picture shows, bathing beaches will all see the negroes rubbing shoulders with your loved ones. From this it will only be a step when negroes will be allowed to propose wedlock to white girls. All under Roosevelt laws.[13]

Privately, Byrnes had anticipated such accusations and told several of his constituents why he thought they were ridiculous. Byrnes viewed his opponents' charges as regrettable, if familiar, examples of racial demagoguery designed "to prevent the advancement of the interests of the laboring people" when there was not "the slightest danger of negro domination in South Carolina." It was true, Byrnes admitted, that the New Deal had helped blacks more than any preceding administration. However, he argued that this help was because any effort to aid the nation's poor inevitably "spilled over" to help blacks and not because the Democrats were promoting racial equality. In regard to the events at Philadelphia, Byrnes felt that it was not only hypocritical but also dangerous for southerners to critcize northern electoral procedures, which permitted the election of a few blacks, if the South did not want to invite northern interference with southern electoral procedures, which prevented any meaningful black participation.[14]

Publicly, Byrnes repeated many of these themes while vigorously defending the New Deal. At Charleston, the diminutive Senator confidently restated what had been the theme of all his senate campaigns:

> I shall appeal to your reason and intelligence and not to your prejudices. I believe that during the last twenty-five years, we have devoted too much time to ... 'likker' and 'nigger' and too little to those matters which vitally affect the welfare of the people. In your heart and mine there are certain prejudices. It is the duty of a good man to control and subdue these prejudices. I have no respect for the man, who, for political gain, will seek to arouse the prejudices of the people. I believe the time has come ... when a man can appeal to the best that is in us instead of the worst.

If Byrnes represented the "best" that was in Carolina, this assessment was correct for in 1936 he won the largest majority in the history of his state's Democratic primary.[15]

Byrnes's conduct in his election campaigns and in his first Senate term may have caused some people to conclude that he had softened his position on race since his days in the House. During those years, Byrnes had pursued the admirable, perhaps courageous, policy of trying to cool racial passions and discredit counterproductive demagoguery so that necessary action could be taken on other important issues. While promoting action on many such issues from 1924 to 1936, however, Byrnes's relative moderation on race was not caused by any major change in his racial philosophy. Rather, this moderation was caused by the fact that he perceived no real threats to the racial status quo either in South Carolina or the national government during those years. After 1936, the rising power of blacks in the Democratic Party led Byrnes to conclude that a real threat had emerged in Washington. Although his racial objections were less frequent and less strident than those of many southern politicians, the Carolinian's actions from 1937 to 1941 indicated that he had lost none of his committment to white supremacy.[16]

Beginning in 1937, Byrnes increasingly opposed Roosevelt's domestic policies because he felt the President was transforming the New Deal from a justifiable "emergency" philosophy of government to an unjustifiable "permanent" philosophy of American government. Many of the senator's disagreements with his party had racial overtones. From 1937 onward, one of the Carolinian's reasons for trying to reform and eventually terminate the Works Progress Administration was his belief that most of its funds were being allocated to influence votes in "doubtful" northern states. Without reform, Byrnes felt that the solidly Democratic South would never get its proportionate share of relief funds because "our negro problem prevents us from dividing politically" and, therefore, qualifying as "doubtful" states. Similarly, one of Byrnes's objections to the national minimum wage provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act was his knowledge that "this wage would have to be paid to every Negro working in any store as well as to white employees."[17]

Byrnes's increasing concern with the New Deal's potentially bad impact on the racial status quo was more clearly displayed in a bitter confrontation with Will Alexander, director of the Farm Security Administration. In the autumn of 1937, Byrnes received word that Alexander was planning to appoint a few black representatives to the state committees which supervised the activities of the F.S.A. On October 9 and 27, the senator wrote challenging letters to Alexander protesting this policy change. He told Alexander that no other New Deal agency had taken such action in the South, that it would be viewed as an attempt to court black votes in the North, and that southern whites had always treated blacks fairly without such representation. After sarcastically inquiring if Alexander thought it necessary to appoint Jews, Baptists, Irishmen, and representatives of other special interest groups to the F.S.A. boards, Byrnes asked Alexander to abandon the proposed change because it raised "the great danger of impairing the effectiveness of your program and arousing unfortunate feelings between the races where today ... only the best feeling exists." When Alexander disregarded this warning, Byrnes contacted Henry Wallace, who, as Secretary of Agriculture, was Alexander's superior. According to Alexander, Byrnes threatened to use so much of his senatorial power against the Agriculture Department that it "scared Henry Wallace" who "just tucked his tail and turned to the high timber right away." Alexander added, "I never did get my Negroes on the state committees." Such were the penalties for challenging the vital interests of a powerful senator.[18]

From Byrnes's perspective, even greater threats to these vital interests were the recurring attempts to pass federal anti-lynching legislation such as the Wagner-Costigan Anti-Lynching Bill of 1935. At that time, the Carolinian's remarks against this type of legislation were relatively restrained. He offered his standard constitutional objections to such bills, presented a persuasive critique of what he felt were the mechanical deficiencies of this particular bill, and cited the declining number of lynchings as evidence that a federal law could not improve the "harmonious" race relations already existing in the South. After the defeat of this bill, Byrnes used his power as Chairman of the Audit and Control Committee to kill appropriations necessary for the conduct of a proposed senatorial investigation of lynching in 1936.[19]

To the Carolinian's dismay, this issue was resurrected by the Wagner-Van Nuys Anti-Lynching Bill of 1938. On January 11, 1938, Byrnes addressed the Senate on this proposed legislation. Upset by the nagging persistence of the lynching issue and the rising power of blacks in the Democratic Party, the usually charming and restrained junior senator from South Carolina took that occasion to deliver his angriest public remarks on race since his days in the House. These remarks deviated from his standard objections to anti-lynching laws to label the pending bill as one designed to "arouse ill-feeling between the sections, inspire race hatred in the South, and destroy the Democratic Party." Although emphasizing his disgust for lynching, Byrnes asked the nation to recognize that it was northern slave traders and the "evils of Reconstruction" which had imposed racial problems on the South while it was the rape of "innocent girls" by a few criminal Negroes which "in a majority of the cases" produced the tragic phenomenon of lynching.[20]

What shocked Byrnes most about this legislation was the increased willingness of Northern Democrats to join Republicans, the N.A.A.C.P., and other "misguided" agitators who supported it. From his premise that southern race relations were "harmonious", Byrnes deduced that the only possible reason for his party suddenly abandoning the South on this vital issue was the selfish desire of cowardly Northern Democrats to court the black vote. In a dramatic paragraph, Byrnes told the Senate that the South had become the victim of a revolution in the Democratic Party:

> It is undoubtedly true that the unity of the white people in the South in supporting the Democratic Party has been due to the belief that when problems affecting the Negro and the very soul of the South arose, they could depend upon the Democrats of the North to rally to their support...southern Democrats may as well realize now that a change has taken place...today 90 percent of the Negroes of the North...are voting for Democratic candidates...The Negro has not only come into the Democratic Party, but the Negro has (also) come into control of the Democratic Party.[21]

With his voice rising in volume, Byrnes turned to the Senate gallery, pointed at Walter White, the executive secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., and accused White of dictating policy to the U.S. Senate. It was not so much the anti-lynching bill but rather the future implications of White's "awesome power" which alarmed the Seantor most. While staring at White, Byrnes asked the questions which had historically frightened most white southerners:

> What legislation will he next demand of the Congress?... Will he demand to protect Negroes in the right to stop at hotels where white persons are entertained... Will he demand...laws providing for the supervision of elections within the States... I know he will make other demands and those who are willing to vote for this bill ... will acquiesce in his subsequent demands.

With penetrating clarity, the Senator's speech correctly identified the ultimate goals of the black leadership and the long-range trends of the Democratic Party. But it over-estimated White's immediate political power. On January 31, 1938, the anti-lynching bill died at the hands of a southern filibuster.[22]

Although Byrnes had other minor involvements with racial issues prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court in 1941, the "soul of the South" speech was a revealing climax to his pre-1941 treatment of racial issues as well as a foreshadowing of his conduct as Governor of South Carolina and his break with the national Democratic Party during the Truman Administration. As defined by Byrnes, segregation, disfranchisement, and white supremacy were the "very soul of the South." To his credit, Byrnes was not an archetypal demagogue in promoting these ends. Because he discerned no significant threats to white supremacy from the South, Byrnes often opposed southern race-baiters who inhibited constructive action on other issues and threatened to cause further damage to race relations. In Washington, Byrnes did not let racial obsessions prevent him from becoming one of the most talented, constructive, and respected southern politicians of his day. Indeed, he often presented the image of a man who would have preferred to escape the racial issue altogether. But Byrnes could not escape that issue and when confronted with what he felt to be a major threat to white supremacy, he attacked that threat as vigorously as any white man. He either could not or would not reject the racist myths held by most whites. He refused to recognize the deplorable conditions under which most black Carolinians existed as well as legitimate black aspirations to basic constitutional rights. As such, Byrnes did not see that the racial peace of which he often spoke was an illusion and that there could be little more than a temporary truce until the policies of white supremacy were abandoned. If Byrnes did not make race relations appreciably worse, neither did he make them appreciably better. When it came his turn to address the haunting issue of race, therefore, Byrnes addressed it in much the same fashion as had generations of white southerners before him.[23]

To look at Byrnes through the prism of racial issues is to see him in his most unfavorable light. He accomplished much that was constructive despite his deficient attitudes on race. Given the history and politics of his region, it may be expecting too much of Byrnes to think that he could have pursued a racial policy radically different from the one he chose. Nevertheless, this qualification does not seem to diminish the tragedy of men such as Byrnes who perhaps achieved neither the full degree of national recognition nor the level of constructive leadership to which their abilities might otherwise have led them. Speaking about southern politicians in general, Ralph McGill wrote an epitaph which may be fitting for Byrnes in particular:

> Out of this melancholy deterioration (in race relations) came a Greek tragedy that has never left the South's political stage... The South has continued to send a number of really

> able men to Congress... To survive politically they were required to conform to the mores of their states. They could never fully attain the national respect and stature for which they so admirably were equipped. The most excellent of these were fully competent to have become Presidents of their country. Yet, their states demanded of them that they ... go counter to the mainstream of national life and values; and proclaim, instead, the virtues of white supremacy... The most able and honorable of them were condemned ... like Sisyphus, eternally to push an unrewarding stone up the hills of bitterness.

As embodied by James F. Byrnes from 1911 to 1941, the collective souls of white folks were apparently not yet equal to the task of freeing themselves from the tragedy of this self-imposed burden.[24]

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[1] Although the generally accepted date of Byrnes's birth is May 2, 1879, both City of Charleston and St. Patrick's Catholic Church records indicate that his date of birth was May 2, 1882. Other evidence also suggests that 1879 was not the correct year of his birth. Byrnes always acknowledged that his sister, Leonore, was older than he and that his father died a few weeks before his son's birth. City of Charleston records cite Leonore's birthday as December 14, 1879 and his father's date of death as March 18, 1882. A possible explanation for this apparent misrepresentation may be related to Byrnes's acquisition of the job of court stenographer for the S.C. 2nd Circuit Court in 1900. Presumably, the age requirement for this job was twenty-one. My moving his date of birth back three years, an eighteen year old Byrnes could have met this age requirement in 1900. See "Record of Births, City of Charleston" (Charleston County Library) V-43, p. 358. "Baptism Registorium, 1881-1892" (St. Patrick's Church, Charleston, S.C.), p. 14.

Among the other public offices held by Byrnes were those of U.S. Supreme Court Justice (1941-1942), "Economic Stabilizer" and Director of War Mobilization (1942-1945), U.S. Secretary of State (1945-1947), and Governor of S.C. (1951-1955).

For a more detailed analysis of Byrnes's legislative career, see W.B. Moore, Jr., "New South Statesman: The Political Career of James Francis Byrnes, 1911-1941." (Ph.D. Dissertation, Duke University, 1975).

[2] James F. Byrnes, *All in One Lifetime* (New York, 1958), pp. 13-20. (Hereinafter cited as Byrnes, *Lifetime*). Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, "Sly and Able." *Saturday Evening Post* 213, (July 20, 1940): 38. The counties included in the second congressional district were Aiken, Beaufort, Hampton, Bamberg, Saluda, Barnwell and Edgefield. Among the many treatments of racial policies followed by Bourbons and Tillmanites are William J. Cooper, *The Conservative Regime: South Carolina, 1877-1890* (Baltimore, 1968) and George B. Tindall, *South Carolina Negroes: 1877-1900* (Columbia, 1952).

[3] *Congressional Record*, 65th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 486-88. (Hereinafter cited as *CR*).

[4] *CR*, 63rd Congress, 1st Session, pp. 5571-72, 2nd Session, pp. 2711-12,

64th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1576-78, 1602-05, 65th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1098-1102.

[5] *CR*, 66th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 4303-05.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Byrnes to W. W. Ball, January 18, 1920. William Watts Ball Manuscripts, Perkins Library, Duke University. N.A.A.C.P. is the abbreviation for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

[8] *CR*, 67th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 543-45. Columbia *State*, August 18, 1922. The anti-lynching bill passed the House but was killed by a Senate filibuster.

[9] *CR*, 68th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1659-61, 4095-103, 2nd Session, pp. 244-46, 5055-56. Robert H. Brisbane, *The Black Vanguard: Origins of the Negro Social Revolution, 1900-1960* (Valley Forge, 1970), pp. 101-112. Congress had been appropriating money for Howard for approximately fifty years and continued to do so despite Byrnes's complaints.

[10] Columbia *State*, June 17-25, July 2-30, August 29, 31, September 3, 7, 9, 1924. Byrnes to Frank Hogan, October 13, 1937, "Campaign Circular," September 7, 1924. James F. Byrnes Manuscripts. Cooper Library, Clemson University. (Hereinafter cited as Byrnes MSS). Byrnes lost to Blease by approximately 2200 out of 200,000 votes cast.

[11] Columbia *State*, July 8, 19-31, August 5-16, 20-27, 1930. "Campaign Circular," July 1930, Byrnes to William Burguson, July 9, 1930, Byrnes MSS.

[12] Greenville *News*, July 9-11, September 6-11, 1930. Columbia *State*, July 8, 9, 18, 1930. "Radio Speech," September 9, 1930, Byrnes MSS. Arthur Krock, "New Deal Issue in Old Deal State." New York *Times*, August 25, 1936.

[13] Baltimore *Sun*, June 25, 1936. Greenville *News*, June 28, 1936. Columbia *State*, June 13, 22-30, July 4-10, 1936. Charlotte *Observer*, July 1-8, 1936. "Byrnes Press Release" July 1936, Byrnes MSS.

[14] Byrnes to B. M. Baruch, June 4, 1936, to W. P. Law, July 3, 1936, to A. F. Lever, August 3, 1936. A. F. Lever to Byrnes, June 28, 1936. Byrnes MSS.

[15] Columbia *State*, July 7-8, 1936. Yorkville *Enquirer*, July 9, 1936. Greenville *News*, July 10-12, 1936. "Byrnes Charleston Speech," no date, 1936. Byrnes MSS. Frank Jordan, *The Primary State* (Columbia, 1967), pp. 73-74.

[16] Leslie H. Fischel, "The Negro in the New Deal Era." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* XLVIII (Winter 1964-65): 111-123. For South Carolina reaction to the national trends after 1936, see Jack I. Hayes, "South Carolina and the New Deal, 1932-1938." (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1973), pp. 499-505.

[17] *CR*, 75th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 3017-24, 7888-90, 7942-47, Appendix, pp. 1675-77. A. G. Kennedy to Byrnes, June 5, 1937, Byrnes to Q. E. Britt, December 18, 1937, to no addressee, August 8, 1937, to William Hall, December 13, 1938, Byrnes MSS. Byrnes, *Lifetime*, pp. 85-87.

[18] Byrnes to W. W. Alexander, October 9, 27, 1937. Byrnes MSS. Will W. Alexander, Oral History Project, Columbia University, pp. 606-09.

[19] *CR*, 74th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 6534-46. Byrnes to K. G. Finley, March 23, 1936, to Wingate Waring, April 23, 1936. Byrnes MSS.

[20] *CR*, 75th Congress, 3rd Session, pp. 305-311.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid. New York *Times*, January 7, 12, February 1, 1938.

[23] For a discussion of the problems of "black Carolinians," see Idus A. Newby, *Black Carolinians, A History of Blacks in South Carolina from 1895 to 1968* (Columbia, 1973).

[24] Ralph McGill, *The South and the Southerner*. (Boston, 1959), pp. 220-221.

Cole L. Blease and the Senatorial Campaign of 1924

by

Daniel W. Hollis

In 1918 Coleman Livingston Blease, the storm center of South Carolina politics since 1910, suffered his most humiliating defeat in a public career that spanned half a century. In the gubernatorial campaign of 1916 Blease had astounded his opponents by holding a commanding lead in the first Democratic primary, and had lost the election to Richard I. Manning by less than 5,000 votes. Blease was stronger than ever in up country counties such as Aiken, Anderson, Cherokee, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg, and York, and the former governor also received good support in Charleston, Clarendon, Richland, Lee, Horry, and other counties in the low country.[1] Furthermore, the founding of the Charleston *American* by John P. Grace brought the much-needed support of a daily newspaper.[2] Confident of success, Blease's "Reform Democrats" met in Columbia in October 1916 to make plans for the next campaign.[3]

War with Germany however, ruined these bright prospects. In the late summer of 1917 Blease made a series of speeches in which he denounced United States entry into World War I. At Pomaria, in his old home county of Newberry, he asserted that the blood of American soldiers killed on foreign soil would be on the hands of members of Congress and the President. "I had rather be an outcast in the eyes of Woodrow Wilson and a follower of Jesus Christ," he said, "than to be a follower of Woodrow Wilson and an outcast from Jesus Christ."[4] A few days later he repeated these remarks at Filbert, in York County, and during the month of August made similar speeches at Anderson and Pickens.[5]

Although Blease made no more anti-war speeches after September, 1917, and announced that he was lending full support to the war effort, the damage had been done. In the senatorial campaign of 1918 he was denounced as a traitor by the press, the pulpit, the patriots, and the President. Although the death of Senator Tillman eliminated his most formidable opponent, Blease met defeat at the hands of Nathaniel B. Dial, a political unknown. The veteran campaigner received a majority vote in only four of the 45 counties, and the campaign was a disaster for Bleasite candidates for state and local office.[6]

The *Yorkville Enquirer*, a key Blease newspaper since 1912, did not support him in 1918. "They got Mr. Blease this time," said Editor David Grist, "and in our judgement it was largely Mr. Blease's own fault."[7] The editor was correct in saying that Blease had brought defeat upon himself, but he was mistaken in predicting that the former governor would no longer play a significant role in South Carolina politics.

Nevertheless, the 1918 campaign marked a turning point in the career of Cole L. Blease. In the words of a veteran anti-Blease editor, he was "tempered and chastened" by the bitterness of the assault launched against him.[8] Never again would the political warhorse resort to the abusive style and scathing rhetoric that featured his political campaigns from 1910 to 1918. Henceforth Bleaseism would be of a much milder variety. Furthermore, the "Reform Democrats" were never reorganized; no longer would aspiring young politicians such as Sam Nichols, Claud N. Sapp, Olin Sawyer, George Bell Timmerman, and C. C. Wyche join the Blease movement in order to advance their political careers.

Although events in 1918 had brought his political fortunes to a low ebb, Blease took two steps in the following year that caused further deterioration of his strength. On February 9, 1919, at ceremonies honoring the late Theodore Roosevelt held at Sidney Park African Methodist Episcopal Church in Columbia, Blease addressed an audience of about 5,000 blacks, including soldiers in the process of being discharged from service at Camp Jackson. Introduced by a Negro minister as a governor whose efforts in behalf of blacks in the penetentiary made him one of the best friends the Negro ever had, Blease praised Roosevelt as "the greatest American this country has yet produced," and as a chief executive who would have provided much better leadership in the war than had Woodrow Wilson. Furthermore, he declared that the domestic achievements of the Wilson administration were "largely a duplication" of Roosevelt's program. The former governor went on to advise the blacks to "stand by their leaders" and reaffirmed his friendship with Bishop W. D. Chappelle of the A.M.E. Church.[9]

These remarks, which were similar to those he made in a speech at Allen University in October 1916, contrasted sharply with the anti-Negro diatribes which had become his stock in trade.[10] The Sidney Park Church speech also came at a time when racial tensions were increasing in the aftermath of World War I. At the same time that Blease advised blacks to stand by their leaders, Bishop Chappelle and other Negro leaders were demanding the vote, more freedom, and a better deal in general for members of their race.[11] "The war was fought for Democracy," said Chappelle in an address delivered later in February. "We want Democracy in our own country."[12]

Apparently the speech at Sidney Park Church dumbfounded both friend and foe. The pro-Blease Charleston *American* and Newberry *Herald and News* made no mention of this newsworthy event, and while the *Yorkville Enquirer* did publish an account, it refrained from editorial comment. Although the anti-Blease Columbia *State* and Charleston *News and Courier* did carry an account of the speech, both also refrained from editorial comment, and most of the press ignored the speech.[13]

In July 1919 Representative Asbury F. Lever of the Seventh Congressional District of South Carolina resigned in order to accept a position with the federal department of agriculture. When a special election was ordered for the unexpired term Blease announced that he would seek the post as an independent candidate in the general election rather than in the Democratic primary. In a blistering statement reminiscent of an earlier day, the former governor asserted that he had been robbed of victory in the Democratic primaries of 1914 and 1916 and that he could not hope to receive fair treatment from officials of the Democratic Party. Assailing Richard I. Manning and other old foes and reverting to his customary Negrophobia, Blease stated that he had no apologies to make for his criticism of Woodrow Wilson and his opposition to the war and to the League of Nations. He also announced that he was against the prohibition and woman suffrage amendments to the federal constitution.[14]

Although Blease advised his supporters to refrain from voting in the Democratic primary in order to be eligible to vote for him in the general election, it was widely assumed that his only chance as an independent candidate would depend upon a large turnout of blacks. "Independantism," said the Newberry *Herald and News*, "means an appeal to the Negro vote" and the editor pointed out that Blease had been among the first to maintain that bolting the party was an unpardonable sin in South Carolina.[15] Meanwhile, the six candidates who entered the Democratic primary joined in praising Woodrow Wilson and in denouncing Blease.[16]

If Blease intended to rally the blacks to his support, his candidacy came at a most inopportune time. Race relations in the state and nation in the summer of 1919 were worse than at anytime since the 1890's.[17] A riot in Charleton in May had resulted in three deaths, and the same South Carolina newspapers that informed readers of developments in the special Congressional election were filled with accounts of racial disturbances in Washington, Chicago, and Knoxville.[18] In Newberry a Negro war veteran arrested on charges of insulting a white girl narrowly escaped lynching when it was discovered that he had pictures of a white woman in his possession. There were rumors that Bishop Chappelle was advising blacks to arm themselves, and a biracial committee was created in Columbia to ease racial tensions.[19] Late in August Representative James F. Byrnes, alarmed by the race riots and angered by the demands of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in behalf of Negro veterans, made a speech in Congress in which he bluntly informed the blacks that the war had in no way changed the racial attitude of whites. Byrnes advised Negro veterans who could not live in the United States without political and social equality to depart for Africa or any other country they wished.[20] South Carolina chapters of the newly-formed American Legion took steps to exclude black veterans from membership.[21]

In mid-August Blease abruptly withdrew from the campaign. As in the case of his resignation from the governorship in 1915, he gave no satisfactory explanation for his action. His statement that he had never really intended to make the race, and that he had a reason for doing what he had done but did not wish to reveal it, satisfied nobody.[22] He probably underestimated the extent of the opposition to his independent candidacy. "I am not surprised," said Senator N. B. Dial, "that a man who was disloyal in 1918 would bolt the party and encourage Negroes to vote."[23] In any event, his withdrawal was a sagacious move. Even under normal circumstances he would have had difficulty in winning. Although he could count on good support in Lexington and Richland counties, the seventh district also included Orangeburg and Sumter, which were anti-Blease strongholds. In the atmosphere of 1919 he stood little or no chance as an independent candidate.

In addition to this fiasco, Blease sustained other reversals in 1919. On July 4 Sheriff Hendrix Rector, the main cog in the Blease machine in Greenville County, was shot and killed by Jake Gosnell, an old antagonist from bootlegging days in Greenville's "Dark Corner."[24] Furthermore, ill health caused the retirement of Sheriff Joe H. M. Ashley, who lead the Blease forces in Anderson, his strongest county.[25]

Following his debacle in the Congressional election, Blease was politically inactive for more than a year. Meanwhile, he continued his law practice in Columbia, which during those years yielded an annual income of more than $5,000 a year, a handsome sum at the time.[26] This practice, chiefly criminal, kept him in the public eye and took him into courthouses all over South Carolina enabling him to maintain his association with jurors, sheriffs, and other county officials who formed an important core of support.[27] He was also active in several fraternal orders, serving as a national officer in organizations such as the Red Men, Odd Fellows, Elks, and Knights of Pythias. In 1921, a newspaper correspondent stated that his hair was grayer than it had been when he was governor, but he was still wearing the beaver hats, red neck ties, and fine suits of clothes that made him a striking figure.[28]

Nineteen-twenty was the most peaceful election year in South Carolina since 1904; for the first time since 1888 Cole L. Blease was not a candidate for public office. Governor Cooper was unopposed for reelection, and Senator Ellison D. Smith, who had defeated Blease in 1914, was easily reelected. When Blease issued a statement mildly endorsing Smith, the senator's opponent charged that an "evil combination" had been formed that would revive the bitter factionalism of an earlier day. Actually, Blease took no active part in the campaign and did not even vote in the Democratic primary.[29] He endorsed Smith because he thought he was the best candidate.[30]

In September 1919 Thomas F. McDow, a prominent lawyer who had led the anti-Blease forces in York County for several years, wrote W. W. Ball, editor of the *State*, the leading anti-Blease journal in South Carolina, that so far as he could ascertain, Bleaseism was dead. The attorney expressed the hope that the "thoughtful and intelligent" people of the state could now proceed with progressive legislation.[31] Among the programs desired by men such as Ball, McDow, G. Croft Williams, secretary of the State Board of Charities and Corrections, and Governor Robert A. Cooper, were effective school attendance laws, better support of state colleges, good roads, reform in the administration of criminal justice, better assessment of property for taxation, and the strengthening of the Board of Charities and Corrections, South Carolina's pioneer public welfare agency. These men were also ardent supporters of Woodrow Wilson.[32]

Bleaseism, however, was only slumbering, and events were taking place that would help bring about its revival. In the Byzantine world of Charleston politics, the John P. Grace faction regained control of the city government in 1919. The Blease-Grace alliance is a prime example of the old adage that politics makes strange bedfellows. An active Roman Catholic, proud of his Irish ancestry, the mayor of Charleston was an urban reformer in touch with Progressive leaders throughout the nation. He favored good roads, woman suffrage, opposed restriction of immigration, and was more friendly to the Negro than any public official in South Carolina. Nevertheless, he made common cause with Blease in opposing American entry into the war, President Wilson, the League of Nations, prohibition, and the administrations of governors Manning and Cooper.[33]

Developments on the economic front also improved the climate for Blease. The prosperity that had accompanied the war continued through 1919, which, with cotton selling for thirty-five cents a pound, was the most prosperous year in the history of South Carolina agriculture.[34] The textile industry, operating at peak capacity, paid good wages and high dividends. But in 1920 the roof caved in; cotton selling for forty-one cents a pound in June, declined to fifteen cents in December, and to eleven cents in March 1921.[35] The disastrous slump in cotton prices was followed by the arrival of the boll weevil, which swept through the state in 1921. South Carolina cotton farmers never recovered fully from the blows they received in 1920-1921. On the industrial front the textile industry suffered less damage, but many of the cotton mills were forced to curtail operations, wages were cut, and dividends declined.[36]

In January 1921 spokesmen at a taxpayer's convention in York demanded sharp reductions in the expenditures of the state government. Various speakers assailed the highway commission, appropriations for higher education, and the work of school attendance officers, whose duty was "to gather up a few kinky headed niggers (sic) and put them in school, instead of putting them in the cotton patch where they belonged." Later in the year delegates to a state convention in Columbia attacked the highway commission, the state board of health, and the tax commission.[37]

In 1920 the Wilsonian tide continued to run strongly in South Carolina, with Governor Cooper, the legislature, and Democratic Party officials issuing statements and resolutions praising the President.[38] In Saluda, however, when the county Democratic convention adopted resolutions supporting Wilson and the League, former senator George Wightman, the unsuccessful Blease candidate for secretary of state in 1916 and lieutenant governor in 1918, made an impassioned speech in opposition. In the August primary Saluda County returned Wightman to the state senate, where for the next four years "Battle Ax" George waged war upon the appropriations for every state agency.[39] Bleaseism was reviving.

In November 1920 the Republicans won a resounding victory in the national elections, although South Carolina stood loyally by the Democratic ticket of Cox and Roosevelt. Blease, whose personal antagonism to Woodrow Wilson dated from 1912, was pleased with the results. He did not vote in the state Democratic primary in August because to do so would bind him to vote the Democratic ticket in the general election, and he did not wish to vote for a presidential candidate pledged to support the League of Nations.[40] Therefore, if he voted in the general election he voted for Harding. As he said later, "I am a Democrat; not a Wilson so-called Democrat but a Jeffersonian Democrat who rejoiced at Harding's election and the downfall of Idealism, which gave us nothing but fresh-made graves, widows, orphans, and billions of dollars taxes...."[41]

Shortly after the Republican landslide Blease delivered his first public address in almost two years at Manning, the county-seat of Clarendon, a low country county in which he had strong support. The former governor said that North, East, and West had repudiated Woodrow Wilson, and that it was time for the South to do so. The election results, he said, were a vindication of his stand in 1918. Blease asserted that men of his viewpoint had been denied freedom of speech in South Carolina, "where the nigger (sic) bugaboo is forever held up to frighten our people into submission to any kind of rot called Democratic."[42]

Blease's denunciation of President Wilson, his attacks upon officials of the state Democratic Party, his pro-Negro speeches, and his pleasure at Harding's election led to speculation that he was going to lead a new Republican faction in South Carolina. His friendship with Joseph R. Tolbert, the Republican leader who dispensed patronage in South Carolina, led to rumors that he would accept an appointment as United States attorney.[43]

If Blease did contemplate such a move, he soon abandoned the idea, and in the summer of 1921 he ended his flirtation with the Republicans. In late July and in August, almost exactly four years after his famous anti-war speeches, he returned to Filbert and to Jolly Street, a hamlet near Pomaria in Newberry County, and asserted that his predictions about the war had come true. In these addresses he also attacked the increased expenditures of the state government, and he singled out the highway commission, the Board of Charities and Corrections, and other new agencies created by the Manning administration, for attack. The employees of these departments, he said, did nothing but drink Coca Cola and ride around Columbia in automobiles. He also called upon the cotton mills to pay higher wages instead of spending money on social welfare programs.[44] The former governor stated that he was beseiged with requests to return to politics, and in November he announced his intention of running for governor in 1922.[45]

During the next several months Blease was busily engaged in lining up support for his sixth campaign for the governorship. During the legislative session of 1922 he appeared in the Statehouse for the first time since he left the governor's office in 1915. His formal announcement came late in March, when he stated that he would be a candidate in the Democratic primary and would abide by the rules of the executive committee of the state party. Conveniently forgetting his campaign tactics from 1910 to 1918, Blease stated that "I have never yet nor will I ever attempt to arraign class against class...."[46] He also announced that there would be no Blease ticket, although he hoped for the election of legislators who supported his platform, which was economy in government. He promised to cut taxes and reduce expenditures by abolishing the new state agencies. The canny veteran acknowledged that he had opposed woman suffrage, but he urged all white women to register to vote and also advised them to keep a "well oiled pistol" handy in case of emergency.[47]

Blease's most formidable opponent in 1922 was former lieutenant governor Thomas G. McLeod of Bishopville, who advocated continuation of the social programs sponsored by Manning and Cooper. Another strong candidate was State Senator George K. Laney of Chesterfield, who also defended the state agencies that he had helped to create. Better schools and good roads cost money, said Laney, who contended that little tax reduction would result from abolishing the tax commission and other beneficial departments of the state government.[48] Three other candidates had little support.

When the campaign opened in June, Blease continued his attack upon the new state agencies, lazy state employees, and increased appropriations for institutions of higher learning. "Many a man comes out of college," he said, "with a sheep skin in his pocket and a sheep head on his shoulders." The tax commission was referred to as the "smelling commission," and he asserted that "Dr. Manning and Dr. Cooper had given the state the worst case of bellyache it ever had."[49]

Nevertheless, the former governor did not resort to the offensive remarks and abusive personal attacks that had featured his campaigns in the previous decade. He made only occasional references to his opponents, while McLeod and Laney refrained from attacking him. Although the *Columbia Record* maintained that the "new Blease" was the "same old Blease" with better manners, he was careful to do nothing that would revive the antagonism of the anti-Bleaseites.[50]

The results of the first primary in late August revealed that Blease had regained his old strength. With 77,800 votes, the veteran campaigner held a lead of about 12,000 votes over McLeod. Laney was third with 23,200 and the other three candidates received a total of less than 10,000 votes.[51]

The opposition, led by the *State*, rallied behind McLeod. Large advertisements in the newspapers by the "Democrats of '76" reminded the voters of the speech by Blease at Allen University where he had told the Negroes to demand their rights, of his "bitter abuse" of Woodrow Wilson, of his candidacy for Congress as an independent, and of his flirtation with the Republicans. The "Democrats of '76" called upon the "heirs of Hampton and Tillman" to defeat him.[52]

Events of 1916 were repeated. Again Blease, on the threshold of victory in the first primary, was unable to gain enough support to win the second. McLeod was victorious by a vote of 100,100 to 85,800.[53] The *Yorkville Enquirer* complained that "the oligarchy, led by the Columbian *State*, remains in control of the situation," but Blease had learned to live with defeat. He issued bland statements expressing regret that he could not serve the oppressed taxpayers and indicating that he would again be available in 1924. There were no charges of collusion and fraud and no bitter attacks upon officials of the Democratic Party.[54]

Although Blease was confronted with serious problems of a personal nature in the fall of 1922 and in 1923, they did not prevent him from making plans for the next campaign.[55] The unexpected defeat of John P. Grace in the Charleston city elections in 1923 weakened his support there, but he could still count on the Grace faction to deliver a good vote.[56] In 1924 he made his third attempt to obtain a seat in the United States Senate.

Senator Nathaniel B. Dial had been unable to live down the term "political accident" that had followed him since 1918, when he had been the beneficiary of the death of Tillman and the vulnerability of Blease. A resourceful businessman whose enterprises included banks, cotton mills, power companies, and a glass factory, Dial expounded a conservatism that had won the support of the financial community but had not endeared him to farmers and textile workers that comprised the bulk of the electorate. Dial was a poor speaker and had developed little talent for political organization.[57] Nevertheless, as the incumbent, he would be an important contender.

A more formidable candidate was James F. Byrnes of Aiken, who had represented the third Congressional district since 1911. Ambitious to serve in the upper house, Byrnes had an attractive personality, was a good speaker, and a talented politician.[58] John H. McMahan of Columbia, former state superintendent of education, insurance commissioner, and legislator, had little support, but he was destined to play a key role in the campaign.

Inasmuch as the 1922 campaign had revealed that Blease had recaptured his following and would probably receive forty percent or more of the vote, the problem confronting Dial and Byrnes in the first primary was survival. Therefore, when the county-to-county campaign began in June Byrnes ignored Blease and attacked Dial as an ineffective senator. Dial made heated replies, and the two men had an angry confrontation at Florence. After this episode Byrnes ceased his attacks, but McMahan, who had been much more caustic, directed incessant attacks at the incumbent, accusing him of nepotism, of using the office for private gain, and of voting with the Coolidge Republicans. The angry senator charged that McMahan was a stalking horse for Byrnes, and after nearly coming to blows at Greenwood, Dial and McMahan engaged in a fight at Gaffney.[59]

Meanwhile, Blease remained calm and dignified throughout the campaign. The former stormy petrel engaged in the role of peacemaker at Florence and Greenwood and of referee at Gaffney. The candidate who had once described opponents and hecklers as "nigger lovers," "belly crawlers," "snakes," "liars," and "cowards," and referred to Negroes as "baboons and apes," waged his 1924 campaign on the brotherhood of man, the fatherhood of God, and the diety of Jesus Christ. He advocated the use of family prayers as a means of avoiding war. At Winnsboro he waved the Confederate flag, praised southern womanhood, and stood by states rights. He refused to reply to McMahan's charges that as governor he had befriended Dispensary grafters, sold pardons, and condoned lynching, and that he had been disloyal during the war.[60] Although his new style was praised in most quarters, it caused one old Bleasite to wonder "What's this here world a-coming to?"[61]

The clash of personalities obscured the irrelevance of the campaign to the serious problems confronting the state in 1924. The agricultural depression that had begun in 1920 was having a ruinous effect upon the South Carolina economy.[62] Furthermore, many of the textile mills were operating only three or four days a week, and there were 116 bank failures during the years 1921-1925.[63] The great migration that caused a decline of 204,000 in South Carolina black population during the decade was causing profound economic and social changes.[64] Yet none of the candidates presented an intelligent analysis of these developments.

As of 1924 the age of segregation was at its peak, and with all of the candidates supporting white supremacy, race did not become a dominant issue. Yet the Negro question was always present in a South Carolina political campaign. Byrnes, who had strong support from the increasingly potent American Legion, criticized Dial for opposing payment of a bonus to veterans of the war. The senator had voted against the bonus on the grounds that unwounded servicemen did not need it, and that it was too costly to the taxpayers, but during the campaign he shifted his opposition to racial grounds. According to Dial, Negroes would receive $24,000,000 of the $49,000,000 that would be paid to Palmetto veterans. Meanwhile, South Carolinians would have to pay $35,000,000 in taxes to the federal government to finance the measure, a burden that would fall upon the whites. Consequently, the senator viewed the bonus as an overall loss to South Carolina.[65]

Although Byrnes did not go so far as to oppose payment of the bonus to black veterans, his racial views were the same as in 1919.[66] In joining other candidates in favoring restrictive immigration laws Byrnes asserted that "I'd rather have one big black nigger (sic) on my cotton farm than a half dozen Italians."[67] Blease said little or nothing about the Negro.

In 1924 the Ku Klux Klan was at the peak of its activity in the United States. Although not as strong in South Carolina as in neighboring states, the imperial order was making its presence felt.[68] There were Klan parades in Columbia, Easley, Lake City, and other towns, a Klan funeral in Columbia, a Klan wedding in Blackville, and robed Klansmen frequently appeared at church services throughout the state.[69] According to one knowledgeable observer, thirty-five members of the General Assembly belonged to the Klan, and the Palmetto delegation to the national Democratic Party convention, which took place in New York during the campaign, voted solidly against the effort made by some delegates to censure the Klan.[70] John W. Davis, the Democratic nominee for President, denounced the organization, but the South Carolina senatorial candidates maintained a discreet silence.[71]

In the first primary on August 26, Blease, with 83,700 votes, representing about 42 percent of the total, held a lead of about 16,000 votes over Byrnes, Dial was third with 44,400, and McMahan received only minor support.[72] Byrnes' strategy appeared to be working. Having eliminated Dial, he could launch a campaign to rally the anti-Blease forces in the second primary. He engaged Asbury F. Lever, an old antagonist of the former governor, as his manager and stepped up his already extensive advertising campaign.

Byrnes, as had Dial, had avoided criticizing Blease in the first primary, but he began a series of attacks upon the former governor. One advertisement, signed by Colonel J. Monroe Johnson, a prominent veteran of the war, called attention to Byrnes' close association with President Wilson and raised the question of Blease's loyalty in 1917. Another, signed by Lever, asserted that the issue was Blease, the "biennial candidate." The "Democrats of '76" reminded the voters of the issues they had raised in the 1922 campaign, and the Byrnes camp also made extensive use of advertisements in which the Aiken Ministerial Association and the officers of St. Thaddeus Protestant Episcopal Church praised Byrnes for his fine Christian character and for the active role he and Mrs. Byrnes had taken in church affairs.[73]

Meanwhile, Blease remained silent in the face of this onslaught. He had used no newspaper advertisements in the first primary, and in one of the few political notices he released in the second he asserted that he had engaged in no attacks upon his opponents and that he had not hired a manager to launch an abusive advertising campaign.[74]

The contest was so close that its outcome could be determined by last-minute developments. On September 6, three days before the second primary on September 9, an inconspicious advertisement appeared on page six of the *Charleston Evening Post.* Twenty men who described themselves as schoolmates of James F. Byrnes at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School, who had served as altar boys with him at St. Patrick's Church, announced that they were supporting Byrnes because of his faith in Christian ideals. They also stated that they rejoiced in his success in life because it demonstrated that "a man can rise from the lowest to the loftiest state in spite of race, class or creed prejudice."[75] The wording of this notice was much like that of the endorsements Byrnes had received from the Aiken ministers and from officers of St. Thaddeus Episcopal Church.

The "endorsement" was the work of John P. Grace and was intended to remind the Grace faction that Byrnes had forsaken his Irish ancestors and had deserted the Roman Catholic Church.[76] *The Post* had little circulation out of Charleston, but a Blease campaign worker printed the advertisement as a broadside and runners distributed 12,000 copies in the up country, where it served to inform Piedmont Protestants that Byrnes had once been a member of the Catholic Church.[77] Mayor Thomas P. Stoney, who managed the Byrnes campaign in Charleston, hastened to denounce the "Eleventh Hour Attack on Byrnes." The men who signed the advertisement said Stoney, were among the most rabid Grace partisans in Charleston, and the distribution of the circular made a mockery of Blease's pretense of conducting a high-level campaign.[78]

[12] Columbia *State*, Feb. 22, 1919.

[13] The author found no notice of the speech in the Abbeville *Press and Banner*, *Columbia Record*, *Manning Times*, or *Saluda Standard*.

[14] Charleston *American*, Aug. 1, 1919. p. 2.

[15] Newberry *Herald and News*, Aug. 1, 5, 1919.

[16] *Columbia Record*, Aug. 10, 12, 15, 16, 1919: Jordan, *Primary State*, p. 123.

[17] George B. Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), pp. 151-152.

[18] Charleston *News and Courier*, May 11, 12, 16, 1919: *Columbia Record*, Columbia *State*, Jul. 23-Aug. 15, 1919.

[19] Newberry *Herald and News*, Jul. 29, Aug. 1, 5, 8, 1919: *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jul. 29-Aug. 19, 1919.

[20] *Congressional Record*, 66 Cong., I Sess., pp. 4203-4305 (Aug. 25, 1919). Copy in James F. Byrnes Papers, Clemson University; *Yorkville Enquirer*, Sept. 2, 1919.

[21] *Saluda Standard*, Sept. 18, 1919.

[22] Newberry *Herald and News*, Aug. 19, 26, 1919. The only reason he ever gave for resigning the governorship was "because I wanted to." *Yorkville Enquirer*, May 24, 1921.

[23] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Aug. 5, 1919.

[24] *Ibid.*, Jul. 11, 18, 1919; Newberry *Herald and News*, Jul. 8, 1919.

[25] *Ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1919.

[26] Newberry *Herald and News*, Aug. 18, 1922. In 1920 Blease's law office was at 15 Clark Law Building. His residence was at 1431 Washington Street. *Walsh's Columbia, South Carolina, City Directory, for 1920.* (Columbia: Walsh Directory Company, 1920).

[27] Newberry *Herald and News*, Sept. 16, Oct. 21, 1919, Mar. 26, 1920; *Yorkville Enquirer*, Feb. 18, 21, Mar. 25, Apr. 11, 1919.

[28] *Yorkville Enquirer*, May 24, 1921.

[29] *Edgefield Chronicle*, Sept. 2, 9, 16, 1920; Newberry *Herald and News*, Sept. 7, 10, 14, 1920.

[30] Seldon K. Smith, "Ellison DuRant Smith; A Southern Progressive, 1909-1929" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1970), pp. 179-181.

[31] Thomas F. McDow to William Watts Ball, Sept., 13, 1912, Sept. 23, 1919.

William Watts Ball Papers, Duke University.

[32] G. Croft Williams to Ball, Feb. 20, 1919, Ball Papers. See Governor Cooper's annual messages to the General Assembly in South Carolina *House Journal*, 1919, pp. 92-93; *Ibid.*, 1920, p. 984; *ibid.*, 1921, p. 35; *ibid.*, 1922, p. 29.

[33] Boggs, "Grace," pp. 111-162.

[34] Ernest M. Lander, *A History of South Carolina, 1865-1960* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), pp. 117-118; Smith, "Ellison D. Smith," pp. 184-201.

[35] *Edgefield Chronicle*, Apr. 27, Aug. 12, Aug. 26, Dec. 16, 1920; Newberry *Herald and News*, Aug. 13, 27, Sept. 14, Oct. 24, 1920, Mar. 22, 25, 1921.

[36] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Feb. 1, 25, Mar. 1, May 10, 13, Jun. 17, 1921; *Edgefield Chronicle*, Oct. 28, 1920.

[37] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jan. 7, Dec. 16, 1921.

[38] South Carolina *Acts*, 1919, p. 647; South Carolina *Senate Journal*, 1920, pp. 9-10; *Edgefield Chronicle*, Jan. 15, 1920.

[39] *Saluda Standard*, May 6, Sept. 20, 1920: Newberry *Herald and News*, Feb. 4, 1921; *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jan. 24, 1922, Other old Bleaseites elected to the state senate in 1920 were O. P. Goodwin of Laurens and W. S. Rogers of Spartanburg.

[40] *Edgefield Chronicle*, Sept. 9, 1920.

[41] *Charleston American*, May 21, 1921, quoted in Newberry *Herald and News*, Jul. 1, 1921.

[42] *Manning Times*, Nov. 24, 1920.

[43] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Mar. 15, Jun. 28, 1921; Boggs "Grace," pp. 196-198.

[44] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jul. 29, 1921; Newberry *Herald and News*, Aug. 23, 1921.

[45] *Ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1921.

[46] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jan. 17, 1922.

[47] Newberry *Herald and News*, Apr. 7, 1922.

[48] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Aug. 4, 1922.

[49] *Ibid.*, Jun. 20, Jul. 21, Aug. 25, 1922.

[50] *Columbia Record*, quoted in *ibid.*, Aug. 4, 1922.

[51] Jordan, *Primary State*, p. 35.

[52] Columbia *State*, Aug. 15-Sept. 15, 1922; Stark, *Damned Upcountryman, William Watts Ball* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1968), pp. 101-102.

[53] Jordan, *Primary State*, p. 35.

[54] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Sept. 15, Dec. 5, 1922; Newberry *Herald and News*, Sept. 15, Dec. 5, 1922.

[55] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Oct. 10, 1922, Dec. 1, 1925; Newberry *Herald and News*, Nov. 24, 1922.

[56] Boggs, "Grace," pp. 206-207.

[57] Jerry L. Slaunwhite, "Nathaniel B. Dial," draft of doctoral dissertation submitted to history department, University of South Carolina, for degree to be awarded in 1979, *passim*.

[58] Winfred B. Moore, "New South Spokesman: The Political Career of James F. Byrnes" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1975), pp. 70-72.

[59] Slaunwhite, "Dial," pp. 220-232. For complete coverage of the campaign see Charleston *News and Courier*, Columbia *State*, and *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jun. 9-Sept. 12, 1924.

[60] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jun. 13, 1924; Abbeville *Press and Banner*, Aug. 20, 25, 1924; *Keowee Courier*, Aug. 20, 1924.

[61] Quoted in Kenneth W. Mixon, "The Senatorial Career of Coleman Livingston Blease, 1925-1931" (unpublished master's essay, University of South Carolina, 1970), p. 20.

[62] Lander, *South Carolina, 1865-1960*, pp. 117-118; George L. Simpson, Jr., *The Cokers of Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956), pp. 190-207.

[63] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jan. 1, Apr. 1, 4, May 6, Jun. 10, Jun. 27, Jul. 22, Sept. 9, 1924; Olin S. Pugh, *Difficult Decades of Banking in South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina School of Business Administration, 1964), p. 58.

[64] I. A. Newby, *Black Carolinians: A History of Blacks in South Carolina from 1865-1968* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 193-195, 203-207.

[65] *Charleston Evening Post*, Columbia *State*, Aug. 14, 1922; *Yorkville Enquirer*, Aug. 15, Sept. 5, 1924.

[66] Charleston *News and Courier*, Jun. 19, 1924, p. 5.

[67] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Jun. 17, 1924.

[68] *New York Times*, Nov. 19, 1923, p. 19; Columbia *State*, Nov. 21, 1923.

[69] Columbia *State*, May 9, 10, 15, Jul. 7, 27, 30, 1924; *Columbia Record*, May 12-14, 1924; *Edgefield Advertiser*, Jun. 24, 1924; *Laurensville Herald*,

[70] Helen Kohn Hennig, *August Kohn, Versatile South Carolinian* (Columbia: Vogue Press, 1929), pp. 160-161; Charleston *News and Courier*, Jun. 23, 24, 29, 1924; *Laurensville Herald*, Jul. 4, 1924.

[71] Columbia *State*, Aug. 23, 24, 1924.

[72] Jordan, *Primary State*, pp. 68-69.

[73] Columbia *State*, *Columbia Record*, Charleston *News and Courier*, Aug. 29-Sept. 9, 1924; Abbeville *Press and Banner*, Aug. 25, Sept. 3, 8, 1924: *Edgefield Advertiser*, Sept. 3, 7, 1924: *Keowee Courier*, Aug. 20, Sept. 4, 1924; *Pickens Sentinel*, Sept. 4, 1924.

[74] *Columbia Record*, Sept. 3, 1924, p. 3.

[75] This notice also appeared in *ibid.*, Sept. 8, 1924, p. 6.

[76] Boggs, "Grace," pp. 214-215.

[77] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Sept. 23, 1924. See copy of this circular in Folder 18, 1924, Byrnes Papers, Clemson University.

[78] Columbia *State*, Sept. 9, 1924, p. 2; Moore, "Byrnes," pp. 77-79.

[79] *Columbia Record*, Sept. 9, 1924, p. 1. A copy of the "endorsement" had appeared in the *Record* on Sept. 8, p. 6.

[80] *Yorkville Enquirer*, Sept. 23, 1924. On Aug. 23 the candidates reported expenses for the first primary as follows: Dial $2,279.00; Byrnes, $700.00; and Blease $155.00. On September 15, Blease reported that he had spent a total of $953.00 for the entire campaign.

Columbia Record, Aug. 23, Sept. 15, 1924. Although the author found no announcement of total expenses by Byrnes, the volume of newspaper advertisements indicates that his expenses in the second primary were large. *Saluda Standard*, Nov. 6, 1924.

[81] Clipping from Columbia *State*, dateline Aug. 21, 1930, Byrnes Papers, Clemson University.

[82] Columbia *State*, Sept. 5, 6, 7, 1924.

[83] *Columbia Record*, Sept. 8, p. 10, 1924.

[84] Jordan, *Primary State*, pp. 68-69.

[85] Slaunwhite, "Dial," pp. 232-237; Stark, *Damned Upcountryman*, pp. 109-114.

[86] Edwin P. McCravy, *Memories* (Greenville: Observer Printing Company, 1941), pp. 47-48.

[87] *Edgefield Advertiser*, Sept. 24, 1924; Aiken *Journal and Review*, Sept. 24, 1924.

[88] For comment on the campaign see Charleston *News and Courier*, *Charleston*

[89] Ball to Derieux, Sept. 8, 1924; Derieux to Ball, Nov. 1, 1924. See also, Waring to Ball, Sept. 6, Sept. 25, 1924; Ball to Waring, Sept. 15, 1924; Ball to J. Monroe Johnson, Sept. 1, 1924, Ball Papers, Duke University.

[90] Jordan, *Primary State*, pp. 71-72.

[91] *Ibid.*, pp. 40-42, 72-72.

[92] Charleston *News and Courier*, Jan. 20, 1942.

The Cuban Revolution in Historical Perspective

by

Neill Macaulay

Last fall at the University of Florida a student came up to me--a good, solid "B" student--with a question about my assigned readings. He said that in several places the name "Che" Guevara was mentioned. Who was this guy "Che" Guevara? It was then that it dawned on me--not only that I was getting old--but that Che had been dead for ten years, that Fidel Castro had been in power for nearly twenty years, that the Cuban Revolution was actually history. The Cuban Revolution had passed the essential generational boundary. People were reading adulthood who had no personal recollection of the late 1950's and early 1960's--the years of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary struggle in Cuba. The passions of those years, of course, linger on--in the hearts of middle-aged men and women--and there is the recurring image of Fidel Castro, on our television screens, little changed in 20 years, which can cause us to confuse past with present. But the rise to power of Fidel Castro and the establishment of a totalitarian socialist regime in Cuba belong to the past; they are historical facts. We now have the perspective to fit them into the flow of history--to relate them to what went before, and what has happened since.

The historian who undertakes such a task will certainly run into people--perhaps even some of his own colleagues--who will insist that the Cuban Revolution went against the flow of history, that it was an aberration. This view is expressed in most of the existing literature in English on the Cuban Revolution, which was written by, or heavily influenced by, those whom the Revolution swept aside. They see themselves not as the victims of history, but as the victims of a small group of conspirators who were able to divert history.

Basically there are two conspiracy theories about the Cuban Revolution. One regards the overthrow of the Batista government and the rebel seizure of power in 1959 as the result of an international communist plot, efficiently coordinated and carried out by subversives in Cuba and the United States. The Revolution was, to quote the title of one book, *A Dagger in the Heart*--placed there, according to plan, by ruthless, dedicated communists with the help of politicians and journalists whose greed and ambition made them easy dupes of the conspirators. This is a theory that has been especially popular with followers of former Dictator Fulgencio Batista, with Cubans who arrived in the United States in 1959, not long after Fidel Castro came to power.[1]

The other conspiracy theory, which has been much more influential in government and academic circles in the United States, was popularized by the refugees of the early 1960's, those who fled Cuba after a year or more of rule by Fidel Castro. These included doctors, lawyers, educators, newspaper publishers, progressive businessmen and liberal politicians. They were primarily middle class and many had actively or passively opposed the Batista dictatorship. The revolution they had supported was a popular, democratic one, which had as its principal objective the restoration of political freedom in Cuba. This, they claimed, was the true Cuban Revolution, which had the overwhelming support of the Cuban people. After the Cuban people had brought down the dictatorship, by popular resistance and underground activity, and as they were celebrating their victory, Fidel Castro and a handful of guerrillas supposedly descended from the mountains and seized power. The rural guerrilla leader was at first accepted by the urban, middle-class revolutionaries because he seemed to share their ideals of political freedom. Then, when Fidel Castro began to "betray" their revolution, Cuban liberals withdrew to the United States, where they sought the help of the government in redeeming "their revolution." They convinced the Kennedy administration that Fidel Castro and his bearded guerrillas were actually a small group of conspirators, without significant military experience or capacity, and without mass support, who had betrayed a popular revolution.[2]

So there you have your choice of conspiracy theories: the Revolution was from the very beginning a conspiracy against the Cuban people, or it started out as a genuinely popular movement, but was usurped--taken over in a period of confusion and betrayed--by a gang of conspirators. In either case, the present regime in Cuba would be one founded on deception and sustained by coercion. The events of the past two decades cast considerable doubt on such an interpretation. For a regime supposedly based on the shaky grounds of conspiracy, the Cuban Revolution had displayed astounding strength. Revolutionary Cuba did not just defeat a United States backed emigrè invasion; it utterly destroyed the forces of the counterrevolution in a matter of hours in April 1961. The Revolutionary government went on to survive the humiliation of the Soviet missile pull-out in October 1962, as well as a U. S. and Latin America trade embargo and various U. S.-instigated assassination attempts against its Maximum Leader. The government of Fidel Castro has overcome the consequences of its own economic mismanagement, and the disasterous results of its efforts to export communist revolution to other Latin American countries in the later 1960's. It has gone on to rack up impressive victories on the battle fields of Africa and on the playing fields of the Olympics. In the final standings of the 1976 summer Olympics, Cuba, with a population of less than ten million, was number eight among the nations of the world.

If recent Cuban history is not determined by Fidel Castro--and I am not suggesting that it is--it is certainly reflected in his career. Today the Cuban Revolution's Maximum Leader is number six in seniority among the world's current dictators. His time in power is exceeded only by that of Tito of Yugoslavia, Hoxha of Albania, Kim II-Sung of North Korea, Stroessner of Paraguay, and Kadar of Hungary. He has already ruled Cuba seven years longer than Hitler ruled Germany, four years longer than Napoleon ruled France. He has shown no propensity for making the kind of mistakes that have destroyed other "great men." His survival instincts are clearly superior to those of some of the world's recent big-power leaders, like Nikita Khruschev, John and Robert Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, all of whom at one time or another had unpleasant dealings with Fidel. It was probably John Kennedy who tried hardest to eliminate the Maximum Leader. He failed so abysmally at the Bay of Pigs that, to recover lost prestige, he committed the United States to flying to the moon and to smashing the communists in Indochina. Kennedy was not a bad historian, but his policies toward Indochina and Cuba went against the flow of history. Fidel Castro has a better sense of history--which is to say he has a feeling for the possible, which includes a good perception of the limitations on his own actions as a national and world leader. He has pretty well demonstrated that, given enough rope, he will hang an adversary--not himself. Unlike many of his adversaries, he has not been prone to wishful thinking. He is quick to realize when he has made a mistake, which makes recovery easier. He is intuitive, but his actions are governed primarily by reason, not emotion. He is no Lyndon Johnson or Richard Nixon.

Recent history helps us evaluate Fidel Castro as a leader. The more distant past can also be useful. It might be instructive to compare Fidel Castro with our top American Revolutionary, George Washington. There were some interesting similarities in their personalities and careers, although George Washington and Fidel Castro were also quite different in some important ways. For one thing, Washington was never a dictator, nor did he aspire to be one. George Washington accepted subordination to the Continental Congress during the Revolutionary War, and he ruled within the limits of the Constitution when he was president. Also, Washington, unlike Fidel, had no interest in exporting his country's revolution.

Nevertheless, there are some striking similarities--beginning with their physical resemblance. Shave off Fidel's beard and give him a white wig and he would make a perfect George Washington for some cognac advertisement. Both men were much taller than average, well built, strong, very impressive physically. They were both well-to-do country boys who loved the out-of-doors. They were hunters and good marksmen. Both were noted for their strong will, determination, and exceptional stamina. Both were willing and able to endure years of great hardship to achieve their goals. They were resourceful and imaginative--but also realistic. Both realized that a great undertaking is not easily accomplished; they pushed on while others fell by the wayside. In war, they both were patient, methodical, cautious, but tricky. Either was capable of launching a sneak attack on a religious holiday. Neither Washington nor Fidel, however, excelled in normal offensive operations. They won by surviving; by keeping their forces in tact, by outlasting the enemy, by wearing him down, by undermining the enemy's base of support among the people.

In politics both underwent some ideological transformation. George Washington began his revolutionary career as a constitutional monarchist, while Fidel Castro started out as a constitutional democrat. Both would eventually espouse the most radical form of government then in existence. Each fought for the independence of his country. Each confronted the world's most powerful nation, and each, to maintain his country's independence, felt it necessary to make an alliance with the world's second most powerful nation.

But Washington, after the Revolutionary War, worked hard to improve relations with Britain and to weasel out of the alliance with France. Whereas Fidel Castro had only recently shown an inclination to "normalize" relations with the United States, and, for the last ten years, he apparently has worked to tighten, not loosen, Cuba's ties with the Soviet Union. Fidel Castro sees Cuba as part of a world revolution, for which the Soviet Union is the most important source of material support. George Washington, on the other hand, did not see the United States in any such role. When Revolutionary France held out the possibility of a partnership in world revolution, Washington wisely ignored it. In this regard, Fidel's sense of history may prove to be inferior to Washington's. We should know in another twenty years.

Putting aside until then questions of world revolution, let's consider just the Cuban Revolution. It is historically legitimate? Was it not, in fact, spurious, based on fraud? Or, if the Revolution was legitimate in its origins, didn't Fidel Castro betray it by imposing a communist regime on Cuba?

It is certainly true that in 1959 and earlier Fidel Castro did profess devotion to the principles of liberal democracy. But this was not the Cuban Revolution. If the Cuban Revolution was betrayed, then so were the American and French Revolutions that in their early stages proclaimed loyalty to Kings. After organizing a government, it took Fidel Castro about as long to discard liberal democracy as it took the Second Continental Congress to disown the British monarchy. A revolution is not the statement of a program and its subsequent enactment into law. It is not a "New Freedom," or a "New Deal," or a "New Frontier." It is true that in a revolution principles are enunciated and objectives are stated; but the principles as well as the objectives can, and do, change. A revolution has its own dynamics: it is both a force and a direction. The revolution is best defined by its leaders; and its leaders are those who correctly interpret the aspirations and capabilities of their people. The leader who betrays the Revolution soon loses his power and, often, his head as well. Fidel was probably right in 1961 when he declared that "to stop, to obstruct or constrain a revolutionary process would be tantamount to betraying it."[3]

Actually, the politics of a constitutional democracy is not so different from that of a revolution--just slower and less violent. The democratic leader who clings to outmoded principles, who falls behind the march of events, is voted out of office. When a Franklin Roosevelt or a Jimmy Carter does exactly the opposite of what he had pledged to do, this can be called "good politics," or even "statesmanship." But when Fidel Castro does an about face, it's immoral. The English historian Hugh Thomas has noted that "Western countries, recalling the experience of Lenin, have come to expect from revolutionary leaders a consistency and a ruthless integrity which they would not demand from more conventional leaders."[4]

But revolutionary leaders, no less than conventional leaders, are likely to try to retain the broadest following possible at any given point in the revolutionary or political process. Candor is seldom a prime ingredient of revolutionary proclamations. Consider John Dickinson's and Thomas Jefferson's "Declaration on the Causes of Taking up Arms," which sought to assure the American people in 1775 that the revolutionaries in Philadelphia "mean not to dissolve (the) union, ... have not raised armies with ambitious designs of separation from Great Britain."[4A] One might even question the sincerity of General Washington's toasts to the King, which he made nightly at his officer's mess throughout the year 1775. Moderates must be kept in the revolutionary fold as long as possible--until they can be radicalized, or until they are no longer needed.

In Cuba, "Che" Guevara, whose role was like a combination of those played in the American Revolution by Lafayette, von Steuben, and Tom Paine, conceded the desirability of attracting middle-class support for the revolutionary cause. "Among students and professional people," Che wrote, "abstract ideas such as liberty are found to be motives for the fight."[5] Those who fought for the Cuban Revolution believing that it would give them liberty were misled. The moral issue here is by no means clear cut. As Cardinal Newman has noted, "almost all authors, Catholic and Protestant, admit that *when a just cause is present* there is some kind or other of verbal misleading which is not sin."[6]

Whether or not the Cuban Revolution was "just," it was legitimate. That is, it measures up to the standards of other revolutions. Its legitimacy was tested at every stage of its development. The Revolution's first phase, the guerrilla struggle, lasted two years. During that period Fidel Castro mobilized Cuba's rural masses, raised a large guerrilla force, fought government forces in the countryside, defeated them, and compelled the dictator to flee. A few days later the *fidelistas* were in total control of Cuba, despite attempts by rival, mostly urban revolutionary groups to make them share power.

There was nothing spurious about the 1956-1958 guerrilla campaign, or the Cuban government's reaction to it. The fact is that Dictator Batista's troops performed very well on many occasions; they put down urban uprisings with great efficiency, and, when attacked in the countryside, they defended their positions with admirable tenacity. Seldom did a government unit surrender unless it was outgunned, completely surrounded, and without hope of reinforcement. Up to the very end, government garrisons fought off superior rebel forces in actions that can only be described as gallant.[7] We should remember that Batista's army had practically no airlift capability, and a besieged unit could be relieved only by a ground column fighting its way through the inevitable guerrilla ambushes. It *is* generally true that Batista's forces were not aggressive in offensive operations in the countryside; but this is not surprising considering the limited support available to them. In Vietnam, where government and allied forces had almost unlimited mechanical resources, the rule of thumb was that a numberical superiority of at least ten-to-one was necessary to defeat the guerrillas. It is not surprising that Batista's army was unable to defeat Fidel's guerrillas with relatively fewer troops; they had less than a seven-to-one edge over the rural insurgents.[8] Still, Batista's army came close to trapping and decisively defeating Fidel's forces as late as July 1958, and there were in Batista's army intelligent officers and officers with the will to fight. They failed in the countryside, but they didn't do so badly.

Batista abandoned Cuba in the dark before dawn on New Year's Day 1959 not because he feared the urban underground--which was predominantly middle class, in contrast to the rural guerrillas, who were mostly lower class. Government forces had proven their efficiency in putting down urban uprisings and could still handle any internal threat to Havana. But there was no serious threat. Acts of sabotage or rebel terrorism in Havana decreased sharply in number and intensity in the second half of 1958. My impression--from association with underground personnel and independent observation on three visits to Havana during this period--was that counter-terrorism there by Batista's forces was also becoming increasingly rare. By the fall of 1958 most of the formerly active urban resisters seemed to be either in jail, in exile, or in the mountains. Batista did not have to resort to police terror in Havana in the fall of 1958; he had the situation there well under control. It has been asserted that the rural guerrillas did not defeat Batista's army, but, in the words of one exile intellectual, "the latter surrendered only when demoralized by the results of a terrorism which formed the official response to violence in the towns."[9] If this had been the case, Batista would have been overthrown in the spring of 1958, when underground activity and police repression in many cities and towns was intense, instead of in the following winter, when things were quiet in Havana and most other urban areas. If Batista's soldiers were demoralized at the end of 1958--and they certainly were demoralized by this time--they were demoralized by guerrilla action. And that is the name of the game: demoralize the enemy. It was a guerrilla war of moral attrition, and the rebels won. Our experience in Vietnam should give us a better understanding of this process.

As it turned out, the Cuban bourgeoisie--which was really an international middle class, or *comprador* class, in that it functioned basically as an intermediary between foreign business interests and Cuban producers and consumers--was far weaker than its size would indicate. The same was true of Cuban organized labor, its ranks swollen by seasonal sugar workers, whose attitudes, if not actual residence, remained rural. Fidel Castro, with a sizeable armed force solidly supported by the rural masses, had no compelling need at the beginning of 1959 to truckle to the urban proletariat or to the bourgeoisie, or to accept the tutelage of Cuban intellectuals--of whatever class or ideological orientation. Fidel realized that the path to socialism was open, and that he could lead Cuba down that path on his own terms. The only possible obstacle was the United States. But the United States government in 1961, heavily laden with intellectuals--"the best and the brightest"--misread recent history and blundered into the Bay of Pigs.

Today, in the aftermath of Vietnam, we seem to understand the world a little better than we did at the time of the Bay of Pigs. We appear to be more willing to accept the fact that even in small countries there can be developments which we cannot control, and should not try to control. Small countries do experience genuinely indigenous revolutionary or nationalistic movements. And they can generate really formidable power in their local area. Armed conflict in the "third world" is seldom, if ever, a matter of proxy war between world powers--Mr. Zbigniew Brzezenski's pronouncements on Cambodia and Vietnam notwithstanding. And when a former satellite of the United States, like Cuba, rejects our social, economic, and political system, it is not necessarily due to bad faith or treachery on the part of its leaders. In retrospect, we should be able to see that the Cuban Revolution was not the result of a plot or conspiracy, against us or against the Cuban people. It was a normal historical development.

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[1] Mario Lazo, *A Dagger in the Heart* (New York, 1968).

[2] An early statement of the "Revolution Betrayed" thesis is Theodore Draper, "Castro's Cuba: A Revolution Betrayed?" *New Leader*, supplement, March 27, 1961. The same interpretation is found in the "White Paper" issued by the Kennedy administration to justify the Bay of Pigs invasion. U.S. Department of State, *Cuba* (Publication 7171, Washington, 1961).

[3] Quoted in James O'Conner, *The Origins of Socialism in Cuba* (Ithaca, 1970), p. 9.

[4] Hugh Thomas, *Cuba: The Pursuit of Freedom* (New York, 1971), p. 822.

[4A] Quoted in Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People* (New York, 1965), p. 216.

[5] Ernesto "Che" Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (New York, 1968), p. 40.

[6] John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (New York, 1950), p. 329.

[7] Major urban uprisings were put down in Santiago on November 30, 1956, Cienfuegos on September 5, 1957, Havana on March 13, 1957 and April 9, 1958, and in other cities on April 9, 1958. Government garrisons at Maffo and Yaguajay were especially tenacious in resisting rebel forces in the last week of December 1958.

[8] Neill Macaulay "The Cuban Rebel Army: A Numerical Survey," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, LVIII (May 1978).

[9] Luis Mercier Vega, *Guerrillas in Latin America* (New York, 1969), p. 41.